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## Riding the news wave: a study on the effects of Newsjacking on consumers' evaluations

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# Introduction

During Super Bowl XLVII on February 3, 2013, a blackout occurred at Mercedes-Benz Superdome in New Orleans, interrupting the game for about 34 minutes. The biscuits brand Oreo quickly seized the opportunity and tweeted an image with a simple and brilliant caption: “*You can still dunk in the dark*”.

The tweet was an immediate success, gaining thousands of retweets and shares on social media, with over than 10.000 *retweet* in the first hour after publication (Allagui and Breslow, 2016). Oreo’s ability to react quickly to the event and create relevant and entertaining content made this episode an emblematic example of Newsjacking, an emergent new Real Time Marketing technique, as well as the main subject of this thesis. Starting from the exploration of traditional advertising in the first chapter, with both online and offline Marketing Communication methods, I will then go more in depth, delving into the wide landscape of innovative techniques of advertising, among which Newsjacking stands out.

Chapter 1 sets the stage of modern advertising techniques. Departing from the history, it passes through the different communication methods, both online and offline, to define the context in which new advertising forms are raising and the consumer’s role in this process. It will also examine the role of marketing communication in shaping its brand identity.

Then it flows into Chapter 2, where are described some of the most successful recently born advertising forms, that apported innovations to previous one, even without substituting them totally. The last (but not least) of them is Newsjacking: here this technique is defined and then are discussed its implication for contemporary marketing practices, highlighting the potential benefits and challenges associated with its use.

In chapter 3, we will delve into real cases of Newsjacking, including a range of brands and types of industries. Through these cases, we will examine how various brands have successfully and unsuccessfully implemented Newsjacking, with the purpose of enhancing their visibility and driving consumer engagement. Each case will provide valuable insights about the strategies, the execution, and the outcomes of their Newsjacking campaign, highlighting its different possible impacts.

Chapter 4, the final one, starting from the theoretical framework established, will analyze the effect of different kinds of Newsjacking campaigns on consumers' response to them. In this section will be described the experiment conducted, from the methodology to the data analysis, with its related conclusions and managerial implications.

The pillar on which the drafting of this thesis was based is the desire to examine new and emerging advertising techniques, in particular Newsjacking, which is still not very widespread compared to its actual potential, stemming from the difficulty for companies to emerge in saturated markets and win over the loyalty of consumers, who have become more demanding and difficult to attract with traditional advertising techniques.

# 1. Marketing Communication Methods and Effects on the Brand

*« The art of communication is the language of leadership. »*

*James Humes*

## 1.1 Introduction

Nowadays, in a world where there are every product and service people need, what makes possible for brands to distinguish one from another is an effective communication strategy and a strong brand identity, which represent the linchpin of success.

This is identified as phase of satedness; when there is over-abundance of products and information saturation, it becomes difficult for brands to catch and retain customers' attention (Finchnová and Wojciechowski, 2022), because their expectations are higher than ever: they want to be amazed. This is the reason why companies are always looking for new communication strategies to advantage and distinguish from competitors.

In our computer-mediated environment, it is becoming increasingly difficult to engage consumers, since they articulate their perspectives regarding products and services, exerting influence over the decision-making processes of the broader populace. Consequently, individuals are no longer mere recipients of marketing communications but actively participate in shaping the choices of a larger audience (Christofi et al., 2020). For this reason, most aspect of a business depend on successful marketing communication strategies: without it, a company may offer the best product or service on the market, but most of potential customers wouldn't know about it.

Communication is a really dynamic field, which has been continuously changing especially in later years, together with consumer behaviors. It has been growing fast, hand-in-hand with new technologies and markets.

Companies using more innovative tools enhance their uniqueness and leave a lasting impression. They are more likely to gain much more attention than ones using traditional tools.

With the digitalization, the way through which companies connect with customers has been revolutionized and with it there was also the rise of a profusion of new



communication methods. It makes it change from the traditional ways of communication, such as print media, TV and radio, to completely new ones. However, this doesn't mean that offline communication should be underappreciated. Already existing communication methods haven't been replaced, but only integrated and boosted by digital ones, because they have a substantial impact on the brand perception.

J. Kim, S. Kim, and Choi (2019) underscore that both online and offline environmental factors exert a substantial yet distinct influence on a company's performance.

In this chapter I'll explore the various landscape of communication and its effect on branding, analyzing the several methods that companies employ to communicate with their customers and build their brand identity.

## **1.2. Effects of marketing communication on the brand**

Communication is not merely the transfer of words or messages; it is the lifeblood of brands, the currency through which they forge connections, convey values, and etch their identity into the minds of consumers (Keller, 2013; Kotler & Keller, 2016). It is through the conduit of communication that the alchemy of branding unfolds, where raw materials like products, services, and ideas are transmuted into the golden promise of a brand's reputation (Aaker, 2014).

Communication plays a central and integral role in the branding process and has a profound impact on it (Schultz & Schultz, 2004). Furthermore, communication in this process is uncharged of the following roles.

- **Build and establish Brand Identity**

The identity of a company, after being created, can be established in the minds of consumers only through communication. This passage includes issues like defining the brand's name, logo, design elements, and other visual and auditory cues that make it recognizable (Keller, 2013; Aaker, 2014).

- **Conveying Brand Values and Personality**

Having strong brand values and personality is crucial for establishing and maintaining the brand's credibility. Lots of people choose to trust a company because they share its values, so, having values that respect social and environmental values is fundamental (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Holt, 2004).

Here, communication helps to clarify what the brand stands for, what it represents, and the emotions or associations it aims to evoke.

- **Creating Brand Awareness**

It's thanks to communication that the brand has the possibility to become familiar to the target audience and to make itself known to the public. Whether it's through advertising, content on a website, posts on social media, or news articles in the press, marketing communication puts the brand out there, making it visible to the public and enabling it to be recognized and remembered (Keller, 2013; Kotler & Keller, 2016).

But brand awareness is not just about recognition; it's also about creating associations and emotions. Effective marketing communication tells a brand's story and can evoke specific emotions and associations linked to the brand. Through storytelling and the use of compelling content, brands can connect with audiences on a deeper level (Escalas, 2004).

- **Differentiating from Competitors**

Communication helps highlight what sets the brand apart from competitors. This might involve showcasing unique features, benefits, or values that resonate with customers (Kapferer, 2012).

- **Building Brand Reputation**

Marketing communication influences a brand's reputation by shaping how it is perceived, building trust, and impacting the brand's image. Effective, honest, and consistent communication practices are key to maintaining a positive brand reputation, while lapses or inconsistencies can lead to reputational damage (Fombrun & Van Riel, 2004).

Transparency and honesty here are fundamental; when a brand is transparent and forthright in its communication, addressing its strengths and weaknesses, it cultivates a reputation for integrity and authenticity (Hoeffler & Keller, 2002). Customers value brands that are open about their intentions and operations. However, misleading or deceptive marketing can swiftly erode trust and damage a brand's reputation.

Marketing can also be a platform for building authority and expertise. Brands that share knowledge, expertise, and thought leadership are often seen as authoritative

in their industry, contributing to a reputation for expertise and trustworthiness (Kotler & Pfoertsch, 2006).

- **Managing Brand Perception**

Communication is the bridge between a brand and its audience, and it wields a profound influence over how a brand is perceived. Effective, honest, and consistent communication practices are key to maintaining a positive brand perception, while lapses or inconsistencies can lead to changes in how the brand is perceived by its audience (Schultz & Schultz, 2004).

- **Strengthen Brand Loyalty**

Staying in touch with your current customers through regular marketing messages is like keeping your brand on their list of favorites. Whether it's sending emails, sharing posts on social media, or giving them personalized suggestions, these messages help maintain a bond with customers (Oliver, 1999). This ongoing connection tells your customers that you care about them and want to be a meaningful part of their experiences.

Loyalty programs and special offers communicated through marketing channels are effective in incentivizing repeat business. Exclusive discounts, early access to sales, and other rewards make customers feel appreciated and valued (Reichheld & Teal, 2001).

So, finally, we can state that communication, in all its shapes, is an indispensable element for the branding process, since it connects the company to its target audience working as a bridge among them.

When well used, communication leads to the creation of a strong and enduring brand that resonates with consumers and drives loyalty and advocacy (Keller, 2013; Aaker, 2014).

### **1.3. Offline marketing communication methods**

As stated above, offline communication methods are fundamental to create a strong brand identity and they can't be replaced by online ones. They still have an enduring relevance on brand's perception, influencing how consumers perceive, remember, and ultimately choose to engage with it, even though they're difficult to measure.

We can identify several types of offline marketing communication methods (Kotler and Keller, 2021).

- **Print media**

The main types of print media are newspaper, magazines and brochures.

Print media are the oldest kind of advertising available on earth, since it has accompanied the development of human civilization. The first journalist products were *Acta Diurna* and *Acta Senatus*, a journal of ancient Roman empire, with the come to power of emperor Julius Caesar (Harahap & Saragih, 2020).

With the digitalization the use of print media had significantly decreased. In 2009 newspaper readers drastically declined to 18.4% and in 2012 fell again by 17% (Harahap and Saragih, 2020).

Now information is no longer exclusive to journalists, people can find them on internet and so they're not obliged to buy a newspaper to know what's appending around the world. Print media are being eroded by online media penetration.

The advantage of print media is their permanence: print media can be stored, reread along time and collected; this isn't possible for online media.

In addition, due to print media historical relevance, companies can reinforce their credibility and their brand values by using these tools (Rai, 2013).

- **Out-of-home advertising**

An OOH advertising is every physical advertising that reach consumers when they are outside of the home. OOH advertising mostly targets consumers when they are "on the go" in public places, in motion, while they are waiting or they are in particular commercial location, like for example shopping center (Gurumoorthy, 2015).

People can see them on billboards, on street furniture, at bus benches, on bus exteriors on is interiors, on taxis, in the subway, on poster, and so on. They could be digital or not.

This kind of advertising is used when a company has the purpose to reach and promote its product to consumers of a specific geographic area.

Undoubtedly, billboards are the most predominant form of OOH advertising, both traditional and digital ones. Especially this last category is emerging in lately years: digital billboards are becoming day-by-day more "spectacular", with giant screens and sometimes even with sound.

This kind of spectacular OOH advertising is capable of turning ordinary urban landscapes into dynamic brand canvases.

One of the advantages of this kind of advertising, compared to other media like television or radio, is that people can't "scroll" or click away from it (Mehta, 2020).

- **Radio**

Radio advertising is less used than other types of offline media, because they are only made by a voiceover: that's what makes it a suitable platform for brand storytelling.

Anyway, radio advertising has a less overhead than other offline advertising methods such as television and print media (Spalding, Cole, & Fayer, 2020).

It could be useful for companies that have a jingle, like McDonald's: for instance, think about hearing the McDonald's jingle on the radio, does it make you want to eat a Big Mac or other their products? Furthermore, it sticks in listener's memory. This occurs because music and sounds evoke emotions and stimulate memories, sometimes more than an image or a slogan.

As this kind of ads doesn't require a big investment, it results to be cost less than others (Hudson & Hudson, 2013).

- **Television**

Television advertising has been existing since quite a century by now, but nevertheless it is still now one of the most used advertising methods due to its ability to combine visuals, audio, and storytelling, that enables commercials to leave lasting impressions and memories.

When well and strategically used, television advertising becomes a vehicle for building emotional connections between brands and consumers (Bo, Li, & Cahng, 2013).

This is possible thanks to the fact that quite everybody owns a TV and watch it. The typical consumer encounters approximately 29 minutes of television advertising that is paid for by advertisers a day, so there is a good probability that he will see your ad (Liaukonyte et al., 2014).

The disadvantage of this method is that the media multitasking phenomenon is largely increasing, which consists in two different media used at the same time;

Nielsen (2010) declared that 34% of all internet usage time take place simultaneously with television consumption (Liaukonyte et al., 2014).

The consequence is that lots of television users, even if it results that their watching tv, don't actually pay attention to what is broadcasting on the screen.

Obviously, there is a wide range of offline advertising methods largely used such as guerrilla marketing, in-store events, pop-up stores, sponsorships and so on that are also widely used. The ones stated above are only the main categories.

Offline marketing communication methods, as they are already affirmed in the market, even if they're almost dated, they are also the most effective to establish brand credibility and brand identity. That's one of the reasons why they are rather expensive. For a brand, have the possibility to be seen from lots of individuals in a public space costs a lot.

At the end of the day, what makes offline methods even more compelling in today's context is their integration with online strategies. For example, a TV commercial can drive online discussion or a QR code on a newspaper can link to online contents, creating in this way a bridge between physical and digital worlds (Geuens et al., 2018).

#### **1.4. Online marketing communication methods**

In the actual world, made of digital interconnection, online communication methods are drivers of modern marketing. They refer to an interaction between the brand and its customers using digital channels and information technology (EnuSambyal and Taranpreet Kaur, 2017).

They are a fundamental tool that every company must use to keep up with digitalization, and together with traditional offline methods they collaborate to construct a strong brand identity and influence brand perception and recognition (Hudson et al., 2016).

In this paragraph, I'll explore the various landscape of online communication and their characteristics (De Pelsmacker et al.,2017).

- **Online advertising**

It is the most known technique of online marketing. In this approach, the virtual environment is employed to display marketing messages on websites, with the aim of enticing online users.

In fact, online advertising usually makes companies gain brand awareness and, consequently, makes them increase sales. Furthermore, it is placed among other

non-advertising content, people could decide to click on it or not and they can interrupt it whenever they want (Leeffland et al., 2014).

There are different kind of online advertising, like banner ads, pop up ads (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

- **Social media marketing**

It is the practice of using social media platforms and networks to promote and market product, services or brands gaining traffic or attention through them.

Social media marketing concerns of boosting brand awareness, website traffic and sales through creating and sharing posts on social media platforms, engaging with the target audience, developing a content strategy and so on (Tuten & Solomon, 2017).

They have become the epicenter of online communication. Quite all brands utilize platforms like Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter to communicate with users, engage with them and build communities.

Most of social media marketing programs involves creating and sharing unique content that attract users' attention and encourage them to share it with their friends and contact on social networks (Felix et al., 2017).

- **E-mail marketing**

It concerns in sending targeted and personalized promotional messages to a group of recipients with the aim of building and nurturing long-lasting relationships and promoting products and services.

Key components of this kind of marketing include building and managing an email list, design e-mail templates and tone of voice and segmenting the e-mail list to send tailored messages (Ellis-Chadwick & Doherty, 2012).

An advantage of e-mail marketing is that it has a high response rate due to the number of people that use e-mail. Furthermore, it is a cost-efficient method to engage with both existing and potential customers (Chaffey, 2020).

After the coinage of the "Permission Marketing" made by Godin (EnuSambyal and Taranpreet Kaur, 2017), customers were asked for their consent to receive marketing messages from a company; so, this practice makes possible to skim customers and reach only those ones that are really interested in that company's marketing messages.

- **Affiliate marketing**

This web-based marketing practice is a cooperative arrangement in which an online retailer can attract new customers compensating a partner or an external website (affiliates) that drive traffic or sales to the retailer. The affiliate is an individual or an entity, like an influencer, a blogger, or a website owner.

The external promoter usually gains a commission for each successful sale, click, lead or other desired actions generated through this practice, otherwise the two company can build a relationship to increase mutual awareness and financial benefits. In most cases, the rewards system of this practice is monetary and automatized (Evans, 2019).

There are several advantages adopting this practice, for example it gains a wider reach with a low cost, since you reach a wider public (Duffly, 2005).

- **Search Engine Marketing (SEM)**

This practice concerns the positioning of a brand's website withing search engine pages (SERPs) to reach the maximum visibility and ranking higher through both organic and paid methods. drives organic traffic, improves brand credibility, and boost online authority.

SEM marketing involves practices such as Search Engine Optimization (SEO), paid listing, keyword selection, and competitive analysis aimed to boost the site's search traffic and enhance the brand's online presence (Sen, 2005).

The most effective and used practice, among the ones mentioned above, is the Search Engine Optimization (SEO), that drives organic traffic, improves brand credibility, and boost online authority. The proper functioning of SEO lies in the fact that customers most of the time use search engines to get around the positioning and the credibility of the brand and its product portfolio, so investing to get higher ranking could be very profitably (Jansen & Spink, 2006).

Every one of these online communication techniques offers distinct advantages, yet at the same time, they present their own particular set of difficulties.

They create, together with offline marketing methods mentioned above, the integrate marketing communication. Creating a marketing strategy involves selecting the most appropriate mix of methods based on the target audience, objectives, and available resources (Batra and Keller, 2016).



Both offline and online communication methods have a fundamental role in the branding process, as stated above (De Pelsmacker et al., 2017).

The advantage that these online communication methods have in common is that they usually require a low investment, they're not so expensive as offline methods.

As the Internet continues to advance, emerging technologies in online marketing will shape the future of how products and services are promoted (Pauwels et al., 2009).

### **1.5. Customer empowerment**

In this perpetually changing environment, not only communication methods are changing and innovating, but also consumers' mind. They are becoming increasingly aware of the product range they can reach, and they are not easy to attract (Brenner et al., 2002).

To succeed in this high-expectations environment, marketers must take into account consumers' opinion to try to respond to their specific needs in the most effective way possible (Constantinides, 2014). They want (and must) to be actively involved in the creation and development of new products and services and in the improvement of existing ones; this practice can prove to be a significant competitive advantage (Brünink et al., 2014).

In this way, they are increasingly involved in the production process and play an active role in the creation of the product, to such an extent that we can speak of a "*prosumer*" (producer + consumer), term coined by the American futurist Alvin Toffler in 1980 in his work 'The Third Wave'. This term identifies an individual who is both consumer and producer, hence who participates in the co-creation of the product together with companies, contributing by expressing his or her preferences and needs, to which the product must be adapted. Only with the participation of the consumer in the production process is it possible to create a product that reflects the required characteristics (Lee et al., 2012).

The changing role of the consumer stems mainly from the advent of Web 2.0 and the social media diffusion. Through them, consumers are able to share personal, social and scientific knowledge (Lee et al., 2012), as well as preferences, personal opinions and reviews. Furthermore, they can share their opinion with hundreds of users and exchange product information with them.

On the other hand, this customer empowerment entails his greater information and awareness of his needs and the right products/services to meet them (Booij et al., 2012). Customers are now aware that companies' main goal is to persuade them to buy their products or services through advertisement, and they are no longer fooled.

The customer empowerment makes him more demanding and difficult to influence, persuade and retain. This is the reason why companies have to astonish him using innovative marketing techniques to achieve him (Constantinides, 2014).

### **1.6. Paving the way for innovative communication methods**

Now that we've explored the various landscape of what marketing communication is about and what are the components of the integrated marketing communication, we can say that it is wide, but there is still the space and the need to continue innovating to differentiate from the competitors (Keller, 2016).

As stated above, we are now in a phase of satedness of the market, and this means that it is absolutely needed a "refresh", a wave of innovation which allows the innovators to distinguish themselves from the others (Kotler & Keller, 2021).

As said in the introduction, innovating serve as the linchpin for companies striving to break through the clutter and effectively engage their audience. It's crucial to understand that innovative communication transcends the boundaries of traditional and digital techniques. It encompasses a diverse array of strategies that not only capture attention but also create meaningful connections with consumers (Tuten & Solomon, 2017).

Since we live in a world in which consumers are continually bombarded with marketing messages from all the channels, they have learned how to ignore some of traditional ones and be indifferent to them. They are starting to be less effective (De Pelsmacker and Nevens, 2012): the main issue with them lies in the fact that consumers now can feel that the advertising is meant to persuade them to buy that product. Hence, they perceive the advertisement as lacking credibility, diminishing its potential effectiveness (Faber and Nan, 2004).

That's why innovative communication methods are the remedy for catching again consumers' attention and interest. They make it more difficult to consider the message as a persuasion tool and they offer a new dynamic and compelling ways to interact with the audience. From native advertising, which seamlessly blends brand messages within

relevant content (Harms, Bijmolt, & Hoekstra, 2017), to storytelling techniques, which convey a narrative or a series of events, there are several new ways to approach consumers and they can be defined the fulcrum of contemporary marketing, as they represent powerful and contemporary tools for forging deep, emotional connections with the audience (Pulizzi, 2012).

The fact that these new tools and methods are rising doesn't mean that the older ones need to be replaced, because, even if they aren't still as effective as in previous years, they are still fundamental to state brand credibility and brand identity (Keller, 2013).

In the next chapter we will explore some of the rising innovative forms of marketing communication in latest years.

## 2. Innovative Forms of Marketing Communication

*« Innovation is not about saying yes to everything.  
It's about saying no to all but the most crucial features. »*

*Steve Jobs*

### 2.1 Introduction

I decided to start this chapter with this Steve Job's insightful quote, since it serves as a guiding light as we are now embarking on the exploration of innovative communication methods.

This second chapter unfolds a new chapter in the story of communication and branding, the one that is defined by innovation, creativity, and a harmonious fusion of technology and communication. It is within this dynamic tapestry that brands are crafting fresh and captivating narratives to engage their audience.

Here, the art of branding transcends static logos and slogans; it takes on a dynamic and immersive quality that engages, inspires, and leaves lasting impression.

This chapter is a testament to the idea that in the era of information abundance, brands must embrace the innovation in their communication methods to stand out, make an impact, and cultivate lasting connections with their audience. The canvas upon which brands paint their stories has expanded far beyond the boundaries of traditional media.

The art of effective communication has been transformed for all intents and purposes and now we are going to explore these new perspectives.

In this chapter I will explain some of the rising innovative marketing communication techniques that are spreading in recent times, ending with the most important one of this elaboration, as well as the object of research, Newsjacking.

#### 2.1.1 A little bit of History

As reported by McDonald & Scott (2007), the practice of advertising exists since the first forms of commerce were built on. In fact, ancient civilizations dating back approximately 3000 years engaged in rudimentary forms of advertising, utilizing wall paintings and vocal announcements disseminated throughout the streets (Beard, 2018). This practice has spread and gained mass audience during the industrial revolution, and it continued

evolving through technological development, until we arrive at the form we know today (McDonald & Scott, 2007).

Despite the longstanding history of advertising, its first definition came relatively lately with Starch, in 1923, that defined it as: “*selling in print*” (Richards and Curran, 2002).

It encompassed a lot of stages and forms to arrive to the innovative methods that we have nowadays and that now I will explain in the next lines of this chapter.

## **2.2 Native advertising**

Native advertising is one of the innovative forms of marketing communication and it has gained prominence in recent years as a response to the growing need for more subtle and non-disruptive advertising in the digital age (Hwang & Jeong, 2020).

It is a form of online advertising that fits in seamlessly with the content on a website or platform. Unlike regular ads that stand out, native ads look like they belong there. They aim to engage users by giving them useful information while also telling them about a product or a brand in a subtle way (Campbell & Grimm, 2019).

These ads can come in different forms, like articles that are sponsored, posts on social media that are promoted, or ads that appear within a website’s content. The idea is to make ads feel like they’re a natural part of what you’re already looking on the page (Lee, Kim, & Ham, 2016).

Native advertising is designed to seamlessly integrate with the content and user experience of the platform, making it less obtrusive and more engaging (Harms, Bijmolt, & Hoekstra, 2017).

Furthermore, it can be divided into six major types, based on the objectives and the form used for the advertising (Manic, 2015):

- **In-Feed Units:** Articles promoted within the regular content stream of the publication, whether with or without assured placement or contextual surroundings, adhering to the conventional editorial style; here are usually used disclosure words such as “Advertisement”, “Sponsored (by)”, “Promoted (by)”.
- **Paid Search Units:** distinct search outcomes positioned within the lateral column or presented in an alternate writing style (either at the commencement of the results or integrated within the listing), intended to garner slightly heightened

attention and assured placement; even here is commonly used disclosure language: “Ads related to...”.

- Recommendation Widgets: advertisement sponsored and displayed within the column or section alongside recommended articles; the kind of disclosure language used here is: “You might like...”, “Sponsored Content by...”, “Recommended by...”.
- Promoted Listings: tailored products featured within the results list, customized according to client specification; commonly accompanied with this type of disclosure language: “Sponsored products”, “Ads”.
- In-Ad with Native Element Units: Advertisements positioned adjacent to editorial content, featuring pertinent material and evaluated based on brand metrics; used disclosure language that is clearly distinguishable style from the rest of the page.
- Custom: customized elements that differ from the previous categories or are too platform-specific to form a separate category.

### **2.2.1 Why Native Advertising is innovative?**

According to Manic (2015), native advertising, which was introduced to the market in 2015, was a major change in the field of marketing communication. There are several reasons for which this cutting-edge form of advertising can be considered innovative:

- Native advertising emphasises the quality and the relevance of the content; it goes beyond just showcasing a product or a service instead, it often provides value to the audience through useful information or entertaining contents while in the meantime subtly promoting a product or a brand (Campbell & Marks, 2015). Therefore, this content-oriented approach corresponds to the modern trends in marketing, reaching their apex in content marketing (Pulizzi, 2012).
- As stated above, native ads’ goal is to blend in with the surrounding content, whether it is on a website, social media platform, or a mobile app. This kind of approach is different from traditional advertising that are visually distinct, and they could be easily ignored by users (Wojdyski & Evans, 2016). It is highly flexible and can be placed in various platforms and formats, from sponsored articles and social media posts to in-feed ads and video content. This adaptability

makes it suitable for a wide range of marketing strategies (Lee, Kim, & Ham, 2016).

- It is focused on the user's experience, since native ads are less invasive compared to traditional display ads, pop-ups, or overlays. In fact, it aims to enhance the user's experience rather than interrupt it (Harms, Bijmolt, & Hoekstra, 2017).
- By offering content that resonates with the audience, native ads often tend to achieve higher engagement rates when compared to traditional advertising formats (Wojdyski, 2016).

It has been demonstrated that think kind of integrated advertising can prompt positive consumer responses, more so than traditional forms of advertising (Nebenzahl and Secunda, 1993). Favorable reviews often come about because consumers tend to appreciate advertising that is both informative and entertaining, without being bothersome (Tutaj and van Reijmersal, 2012).

### **2.2.2 Effects of Native Advertising on the brand**

Native advertising has a positive effect on two important variables, brand prominence and message appeal (Harms, Bijmolt & Hoekstra, 2017).

The first one is about the degree of visibility, recognition, and effective prominence that a brand reach in the marketplace or within a specific sector, niche, or industry (Campbell & Marks, 2015). This variable is a set of brand awareness, brand visibility in marketing channels, consumer perceptions, and the overall strength of the brand in comparison to competitors (Wojdyski & Evans, 2016).

A brand could be considered a prominent one when it is easily recognizable, usually associated with positive attributes and contents, and comes to mind readily when consumers think a particular product or service category (Barban et al., 2001).

A high brand prominence has a series of positive effects on the brand; in fact, it can lead to increased customer trust, loyalty, and a competitive edge in the market. It empowers a brand to shape the decisions and inclinations of consumers (Wojdyski & Evans, 2016).

Being prominently recognized becomes a valuable advantage for businesses aiming to carve out a robust and lasting impression within the consciousness of their intended audience (Barban et al., 2001).

Then we have the second variable on which native advertising has a positive effect, message appealing. It enhances the allure of a brand's message by tactically embedding itself within the fabric of content and the user experience (Harms, Bijmolt & Hoekstra, 2017). This approach not only makes the delivery of the brand's message more captivating but also ensures it is presented in a way that is immersive and unobtrusive.

Here, the visual consistency plays a significant role for the appeal of the message. In fact, native ads are meticulously designed to perfectly align with the shape and the visual aesthetics of the platform, ensuring that they seamlessly blend in. This alignment amplifies the attractiveness of the message, minimizing the chances of it being seen as an unwelcome interruption from the outside.

The significance and the interactivity of native advertising is its commitment to delivering valuable content and fostering user engagement (Campbell & Marks, 2015). Users, appreciating interactive content that goes beyond mere promotion, are more likely to find the message appealing.

Consequently, if people find these contents interesting and valuable, they will interact with them and share them on social media, creating a ripple effect that extends the reach and amplifies the appeal through peer recommendations.

Essentially, native advertising is like a well-orchestrated performance, where different elements work together to make brand messages more appealing (Harms, Bijmolt & Hoekstra, 2017). It's about fitting seamlessly into what users are already interested in, telling a good story, looking right at home visually, and delivering content that people find valuable. All these parts come together to create a message that not only grabs attention but also connects, involves, and stays with the audience.

Native advertising isn't just a plan; it's a way of thinking that highlights how being relevant and subtle is crucial in promoting a brand (Wojdyski & Evans, 2016). It encourages marketers to go beyond just advertising and become storytellers, crafting content that teaches, entertains, and adds value to the lives of consumers.

### **2.3 Influencer and content-creators marketing**

Even if it is not yet academically defined in literature, one of the most prominent innovative communication strategies of latest years is influencer marketing. It is a new form of digital communication that should help brand owners to accomplish



communication goals (Brown and Hayes, 2008). I decided to go in depth in explaining this topic since it is a fundamental component of marketing communication of recent years.

In particular, the practice of influencer marketing consists in a strategic approach in which brands collaborate with individuals, commonly known as influencers, who have a substantial and engaged following on social media and usually considered as opinion leaders (Bakker, 2018), since they exert a strong influence on consumers' attitudes and behaviors (Christofi et al., 2020). From a study of voters in the 1940 American Presidential Election conducted by Lazarsfeld et al. (1948) emerged that mass media exerted an indirect influence on the audience, working through opinion leaders who, in turn, influenced the behavior patterns of more passive segments of the population; in fact, consumers' reactions to messages conveyed by mass media are intermediated by opinion leaders, who communicate their own interpretation of information through numerous group interactions (Christofi et al., 2020). Hence, while consumers are influenced by both of these factors, the interpersonal communication is a more powerful force in determining the tendencies and decisions compared to the impact of mass media. (Casaló et al., 2018). Some influencers can also be *Key Opinion Leaders* (KOLs), if they have a high-level of expertise on a specific topic within a particular field. For instance, they can be specialized in make-up application, skin care products, nutrition, and so on. KOLs are trusted for advice concerning their field of expertise and their followers are for the most part interested in those subjects (Dimitrieska and Efremova, 2021).

The main goal of this practice is to use the influencers' credibility and wide-reaching impact to promote brand's products or services to their audience, that is usually a wide number of people. Of course, it should be chosen an influencer who aligns with the brand's values and target audience. The focus is on creating genuine and relatable content that resonates with the influencer's followers, aiming to boost brand visibility, credibility, and encourage consumer actions like purchases or engagement.

In this way, brands give themselves a face (or more than one), that people associate to their products and their consumption experience.

As its core, it takes advantage of the trust and realness built by people who have gathered a loyal audience in particular areas of interest.

Moreover, it is a way for companies to interact with customers on social media, exploiting the popularity of characters already known by users, the so-called *social media stars*. Brands alike have discovered these social platforms as effective ways to connect and interact with their stakeholders (Tuten and Solomon, 2013).

The reason why these platforms are so attractive as communication routes for brands is that in accordance with recent statistical data (Digital Marketing Institute, 2019; Young, 2017), an estimated 50% of internet users engage with influencer accounts on social media platforms, seeking and trusting recommendations from influencers. Additionally, approximately 40% of users have made product purchases after encountering them on Instagram or YouTube.

Fink et al. (2020) presented findings indicating that the perceived credibility of influencers positively influences purchase intentions, and this impact remains significant over an extended period of four years. This underscores the enduring and substantial nature of the investment in influencer marketing.

Furthermore, scholarly literature has affirmed that the allure of an influencer, a quality not solely contingent on physical attributes but inclusive of factors such as familiarity and likeability, significantly influences consumers' reactions. This impact extends to their attitudes toward the endorsement and brand, as well as their intentions to make a purchase (Torres et al., 2019).

The close connection between influencers and brands is changing how things are introduced to the market. It's not just about selling anymore; brands and influencers are working together to tell stories. Brands are using the influencers' special voices and viewpoints. The realness and connection that influencers bring make the marketing messages feel less like ads and more like honest suggestions from a friend.

The highlight of influencer marketing today is its ability for fitting right into the content people already enjoy. Influencers, being genuine, work as a connection between regular ads and the stuff people naturally like. Their followers don't just see them as messengers for brands but as reliable sources for suggestions. This adds a touch of realness and trust that you might not get from regular ads.

In this respect, influencers can be also identified as *content creators* who wield a significant impact on digital platforms. A content creator could be any individual who creates and posts a content, but the difference between influencers and other users is that

the first ones are usually paid to do that, and they usually have a team of expert in content creation that create posts, decides what and when to post, and have care of their social profiles (Brake, 2014).

Furthermore, the popularity of influencer marketing is closely linked to how people's habits are changing. Nowadays, especially among younger people, traditional advertising doesn't work as well. People want real connections and suggestions from those they believe in. Influencers, with their well-crafted personal brands, become these trusted figures. They don't just promote products; they share real stories that connect with their followers.

To describe in simple terms the function of influencer in the purchasing process, it's essential to understand the roles people play when it comes to deciding to buy something. According to Percy and Elliott (2016), there are five key roles in this decision-making process. The *initiator* suggests the idea to buy, the *influencer* gives advice about the product or service at issue, the *decider* makes the final choice, the *purchaser* buys it, and the *user* is the one who actually uses the product or service. It's worth noting that one person might take on multiple roles in this process.

Here, the objective of the brand manager lies in understanding the roles in the decision process, since the marketing communication is aimed not only at individuals but foremost at individuals playing in a role. This understanding is crucial, since they have to instrumentalize the individuals in their roles in order to effectively communicate (Bakker, 2018).

### **2.3.1 Different types of influencer marketing**

A distinction can be made between two types of influencer marketing: paid and earned. The first one is about remunerating an influencer for the promotion of a brand's product or service. Under this framework, the influencer receives compensation for generating content that highlights the brand's offerings. The financial implications of paid influencer marketing exhibit considerable variability, contingent upon factors such as the influencer's audience size, engagement metrics, and the nature of the requisite content. Remuneration structures range from influencers commanding substantial fees, often reaching thousands of dollars for a singular post, to those who may consider product or service barter as a form of compensation. In this type of advertising, influencers are

usually provided with a unique link to the online shop of the brand they are promoting, and they can also be paid on the basis of the number of purchases made through this link (Yesiloglu and Costello, 2021).

The main advantage of this kind of influencer marketing is that brands can have control over contents created and shared by influencers and make sure that they align with the company's marketing goals. On the other hand, paid influencer marketing can be very expensive, mainly for small brands, start-ups, or companies with a limited budget. Additionally, people could see this kind of advertising as less authentic since influencers are being compensated to promote that product or service.

Then, there is earned influencer marketing, alternatively designed as organic influencer marketing. It occurs when an influencer endorses and promotes a product without being compensated in no way whatsoever. Here, influencers use the product or service for personal purposes, and then they genuinely decide to share and recommend it with their followers. In order to clarify that they are not paid for that advertising, they usually use the hashtag #NoAdv. As a consequence, this kind of advertising results more authentic and trustworthy, due to the fact that followers may see their recommendation as more spontaneous and genuine (Yesiloglu and Costello, 2021).

However, the downside of earned influencer marketing is the non-control of contents shared, and the option of the influencer sharing a negative review cannot be excluded.

The decision of whether to employ paid or earned influencer marketing basically hinges on several factors, such as objectives, financial resources, and target demographic of the brand. Paid one may be more efficacious for those brands who are seeking for rapid outreach to a broader audience or those endowed with a consistent budget. On the other hand, earned influencer marketing might be more appropriate for those brands who aspire to cultivate enduring relationships with influencers and foster the development of more authentic and genuine contents.

Both the approaches could yield success for the brand if executed with tactic and precision. The most important thing, in both cases, is to cultivate relationships with influencers aligned with company's values, marketing objectives and aesthetic principles.

### **2.3.2 The downside of influencer marketing**

This technique can be a double-edged sword, since the brand is represented by influencer, and if this person makes something wrong, it will be judged as a negative one by the public opinion, and this will be very likely to also influence people perceptions about the brand, turning them negative, lowering their perceptions of a brand's uniqueness and consequently their attitudes towards it. A striking example could be the one about Chiara Ferragni and Balocco: the influencer was accused of committing fraud, together with the president of the confectionery company, Alessandra Balocco.

All began in 2021, when they decided to do a collaboration, the “Pandoro Pink Christmas”, that consisted of realizing this customized and branded pink pandoro, in collaboration with Chiara Ferragni brand. A big part of the revenues of the Pink pandoro campaign should have been donated to charity to the Regina Margherita Hospital in Turin to purchase a new machine for the therapeutic treatment of children suffering from Osteosarcoma and Ewing's Sarcoma, but this did not happen, and so Chiara Ferragni and Balocco were firstly investigated and then fined by anti-trust law.

This clearly resulted in a loss of followers and of income from both the parts, in fact Balocco stated that the collaboration with Chiara Ferragni was unsuccessful and made them lose money and customers, even if they didn't declare how many in numbers.

It should also be mentioned that the €600 suit the influencer wore during the apology video she posted on social media after the incident sold out in a few hours, and this is always related to the fact that influencer marketing is a double-edged sword, it can have both negative and positive implications.

Clearly, this does not always happen, in fact, most of the time influencer marketing only generates benefits, but like everything it has its pros and cons. It is up to companies to decide to take the risk or not.

### **2.4 Newsjacking**

Here we come to the most important topic of this elaborate, as well as the subject of my research study, Newsjacking, which falls within the branch of real time marketing. This latter refers to all those marketing activities that leverage the ability to respond quickly to external events and stimuli.

In 2017, the term “Newsjacking” gained recognition when it appeared on the shortlist for the Oxford English Dictionary’s word of the year. This term results by the fusion of “news” and “hijacking”, with its origins tracing back to the 1970s, where it referred to the illicit practice of profiting from stolen newspapers, selling them to scrap dealers. Then, it became commonly used due to the increased usage of social media platforms and the consequent rise of social media advertising.

However, its contemporary usage emerged in the early twenty-first century, popularized by David Meerman Scott’s book released in 2011 and titled “Newsjacking: How to Inject Your Ideas into a Breaking News Story and Generate Tons of Media Coverage” (Angell et al., 2019).

### 2.4.1 What is Newsjacking?

This phenomenon is about using breaking information and trending topics for advertising purposes, to foster the brand and consumers’ engagement with it (Muthukodiarachchi and M.A.M.C. Senarathna, 2023). It comprises taking advantage of current viral news stories, trending topics, or events, leveraging on their popularity to get noticed by the audience. It is a powerful tool since in our world we have a flow of news breaking every second and marketers have the chance to ride the wave and benefit from them (Gripich and Grushevich, 2018).

As stated above, Newsjacking comes under the branch of real time marketing, in particular falls under the category of reactive and unplanned ones, as in the scheme below.

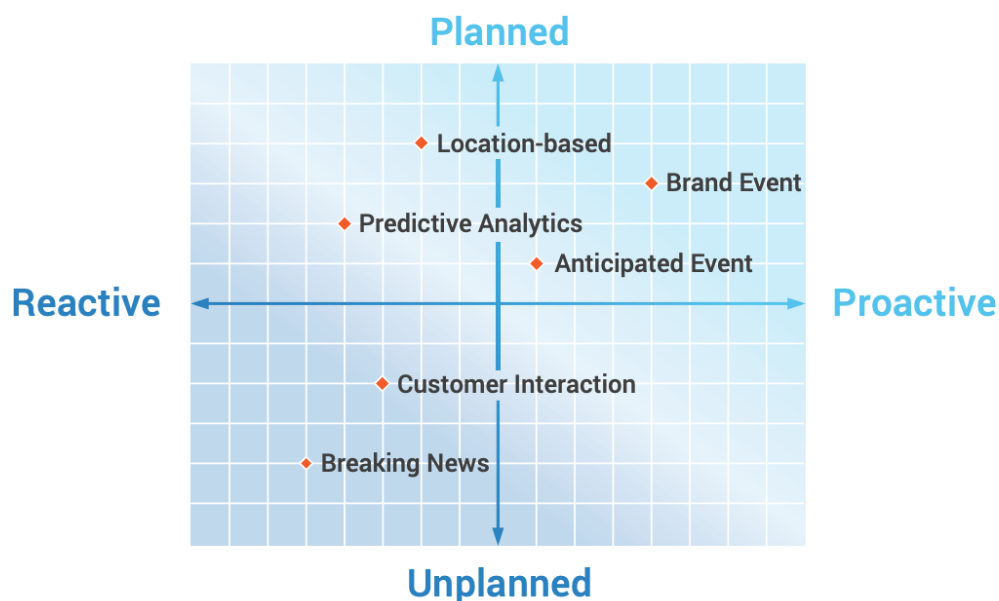


Figure 1: Lieb et al., *Real-Time Marketing: the agility to Leverage “Now”*, December 17, 2023

It is the most reactive and unplanned kind of real time marketing; here advance preparation is impossible, and an acute degree of sensitivity is called for, since most of times breaking news aren't good news (Lieb et al., 2013).

The fundamental premise of newsjacking is to interrogate each breaking news event with the question of how one's brand or product can be strategically connected to the news story. If a brand succeeds in finding a story which is somehow related to its business, it has the opportunity to create real time contents, and so to “newsjack”, and try to gain advantages from that news or story. As a matter of fact, the Oxford dictionary defines Newsjacking as “a practice of taking advantage of current events or news stories in such a way as to promote or advertise one's product or brand”.

As a result, every breaking news, trend, or viral story trigger a fight against time to post it faster and in a more captivating and original way from competitors, trying to find even the smallest extra detail to make their story more appealing.

Brands that choose to employ Newsjacking as an advertising strategy ensure that their social media pages are not only followed and consulted by users for information about products or services offered but also serve as a source for current events and news stories that the brands narrate. This approach broadens the scope of interaction with their audience, engaging them on a variety of topics beyond just commercial offerings.

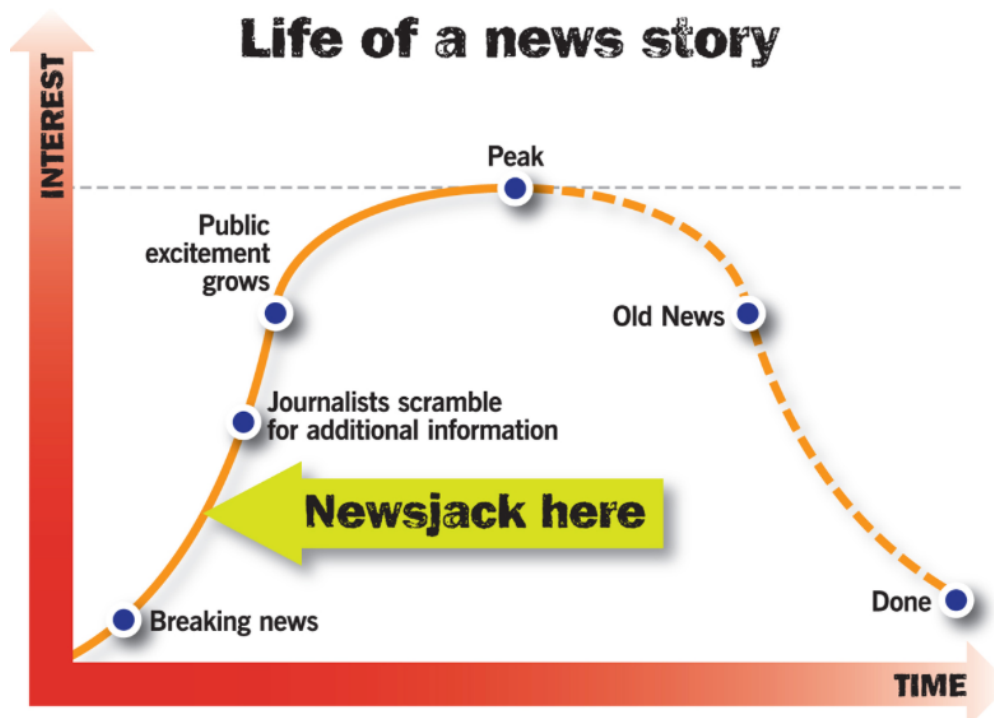


Figure 2: Scott David Meerman, “Newsjacking: How to Inject Your Ideas into a Breaking News Story and Generate Tons of Media Coverage”, 2011

As stated by David Scott, the best moment to “*newsjack*” is after the news story breaks and before journalists’ attempt to get additional information and juicy details. This practice does not appear to be simple and linear, since reporters immediately start investigating searching for as many details as possible. The timing of these steps in the life of a news story may vary depending on the size of the event (Jonker, 2024).

These efforts often present brands with cost-effective opportunities to strategically insert themselves into the public sphere during moments of heightened public interest and attention. This strategic insertion grants brands increased exposure and the chance to be associated with noteworthy and pertinent narratives (Burton and McClean, 2020). The reason why this occurs is simple: connect a product or a service with something that is already popular can allow the company to gain more attention, engagement, leads, and consequently sales.

Here, brands are not only competing on marketing communication, but also on quickness to react; in fact, Newsjacking is a powerful marketing communication strategy, but only when executed in real time (which can last a couple of days or even some weeks in many cases). For its correct use, timing is crucial; in fact, it favors quick, observant, and skilled communicators (Scott, 2011). If brands want their newsjacking activity to be effective, they must try to talk about a fact before it goes viral.

Newsjacking is a fast alternative to make companies gain attention and put themselves in the conversation about that specific topic. For this reason, marketing communication agencies started to offer Newsjacking services since this practice is becoming increasingly widespread. In Italy is still uncommon for agencies to offer this kind of service, while in the United States this activity is gaining ground.

For example, there’s a public relation agency in New York, Channel V Media, that promote this kind of advertising and offer Newsjacking services. To cite their website, “We incorporate newsjacking as a part of our holistic Public Relations strategy to make sure that your company sees a steady stream of press coverage, regardless of whether you have news or not”. They promote this service as one of the most innovative of their product portfolio, in fact they dedicated an entire page to describe it, as it is a still seems to be an uncommon and not so known technique.



As much as to understand that this phenomenon is raising, is dutiful to say that are being provided many Newsjacking courses (for example the one made by Francesco Martinelli on Edulia Masterclass platform), to teach to marketers how to improve it in the best way.

#### **2.4.2 How to Newsjack?**

David Scott, in his famous 2011 book about Newsjacking mentioned above, identified a 3 steps process about how to “*newsjack*”:

1. *Find news to jack*: at this stage it is crucial to monitor keywords, phrases and trending word clouds, to stay focus on tracking daily papers, news websites and social media feeds, in particular the most used like Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, and lately also Threads. Social listening is one of the central components of a successful Newsjacking campaign. It empowers brands to engage with current events in a manner that is informed, tactful, and aligned with their audience’s interests and sentiments, as well as helping to mitigate risks.

As a primary initial step, it is crucial to meticulously identify and actively monitor the diverse range of individuals and entities who report on topics relevant to the company’s business, industry and niche. Such individuals and entities may include bloggers, analysts, journalists, and any other relevant voices within the industry or public sphere and companies can find them starting from checking search engines like Google, Yahoo, Bing, and so on. This activity of media monitoring allows the company to keep an eye out for content that aligns with your brand. Another way to find hot topics, is using Google Trends or Google Alert platforms, or similar ones. The most important step of this stage is to verify the sources before taking them for granted (Loktionova, 2024).

Major event, even better if with a recurrence, like cultural festivals, sports championships, political events, and so on, are excellent opportunities for Newsjacking, since they usually capture widespread attention and generate a significant media coverage, as well as attracting public interest (Jonker, 2024).

2. *Formulate a strategy in real-time*: the company should be able to generate the most feasible strategy as quickly as possible. Speed and timeliness must be matched by knowledge and accuracy. At the same time, it is necessary elaborate a fixed pattern to put in action when the right news breaks and the company needs

to react fast; for example, if the company uses to post news or trends on social media, is essential to have a clear strategy to follow, a common thread that makes the company's feed homogeneous; specifically, a format for posts, same tone of voice, colors and so on.

3. *Instantly get your take into the market*: the move must be made immediately, in such a way that the company name is promptly associated with the news and entered in the flow of the speech. The content must be created in such a way that users are driven to share it and generate engagement.

This process encapsulates the three main steps required to run a Newsjacking campaign, and there are countless companies that implement it, and they are growing as this technique becomes more widespread.

### **2.4.3 Who can Newsjack?**

Not only brands can “*newsjack*”, but even influencers also use to. They can exploit their established large audience on social media to promote engaging Newsjacking campaigns. They can both do it for their personal branding or for collaboration with other brands. This technique is accessible to everyone that want to board on the ship of an emergent story or trend, literally everyone can *newsjack*.

Even the ex-president of the United States Barak Obama did: he joined the social network Instagram on Tuesday January 3rd, 2012, the exact same day as the Republican presidential candidates’ Iowa Caucus (Scott, 2011). This fact made a lot of impressions and shares, to such an extent that his Instagram profile gained almost 30.000 followers in only two days and all the media talked about it (Jennings, 2012).

In truth, Newsjacking may not be relevant to the nature of some companies. Not all business matches the nature of this technique, and, if so, trying to force it will not bring the hoped-for results (Jonker, 2024).

For example, low-cost and luxury brand cannot approach this technique in the same way; they both may engage in Newsjacking, but their approach and objectives may differ based on their brand identity, target audience, and marketing priorities. Actually, it is not common to see luxury brands publishing content of this kind, but, if they do, their main focus may be on maintaining exclusivity and sophistication, while low-cost brands usually use a more confidential approach, through irony and meme.

#### 2.4.4 Types of newsjacking

Newsjacking can be done in different ways and have many forms, depending on the kind of news event and the message the company is trying to transmit; the main distinction is between reactive and proactive ones (Gripich and Grushevich, 2018):

- *Reactive newsjacking* is the most used approach; it is about responding promptly to breaking news, current events, or trending topics with relevant contents that are somehow related with your brand, product, or service to the news (Bookkah, 2023). This kind of newsjacking requires the agility and the ability to act fast and capitalizes on fleeting opportunities. Here, a keen understanding of current event is crucial to effectively leverage opportunities as they arise in the news cycle.
- *Proactive newsjacking*, conversely, consists in anticipating possible future events or trends, preparing a strategy in advance that can be put in place when the news breaks. Here, marketers have to forwardly identify upcoming events or trends that are likely to generate a large media coverage, and so a large engagement. Then, they get prepared to the event, creating contents or entire campaigns that align with the topic. This more strategic approach requires foresight, and a more accurate analysis to ensure the success and the timing of the campaign and that the latter aligns with the anticipated news events.

The main difference between the two is the fact that the former rewards agility and speed, while the latter rewards planning and accurate analysis and strategy. They also differ in timing: one occurs in real-time with the events as they happen, while the other takes place before a future event, trying to anticipate it.

Newsjacking can be differentiated in many other different forms: it could be ironic, joking on a trending topic, or serious, talking about crime news for example, or cultural, providing people instructional content, or it can be even devotees to social causes. Depending on which of these the company or the influencer is choosing, the tone of voice and the approach have to be different.

Every kind of Newsjacking adapt better to one or more different platforms: for instance, for what is concerning breaking news Instagram and Facebook are the most fitable ones, while for ironic contents Instagram and TikTok are the best ones.

### **2.4.5 Trendjacking**

Newsjacking is not only about exploiting current breaking news to promote a brand: it involves also leveraging current trends. This technique is called Trendjacking and it is about latching onto trends that are already popular among consumers, such as fashions, social media challenges, memes or cultural movements (Jonker, 2024). It is mostly used on TikTok, where news trends emerge every day, because of the nature of the content that is published on the platform.

Since its launch in 2016, the app has been a great success: in October 2018, TikTok became the most downloaded app in the photo and video category on the Apple store globally (Augusto et al., 2020).

The TikTok application centers on short video formats, allowing users to access a broad array of soundtracks and music, alongside options for incorporating special effects and filters. With this platform, it was introduced the “Micro narrative” model, that involves sharing contents in 15-second short videos (Arya et al., 2020); this significantly simplified the process of creation and publication of contents on the platform.

Additionally, it facilitates the uploading of videos directly from users' phones and includes a reaction feature, enabling users to record and share their responses to other videos (Augusto et al., 2020).

Originally popular among teenagers, TikTok swiftly expanded its reach to a broader audience due to the unique aspects of its functionality (Mljugić and Taboroši, 2022).

The application utilizes local trend-based hashtags to recommend content creation topics to its users, effectively leveraging regional trends to facilitate the production of viral content on the platform (Haryanto et al., 2022), and this is the mechanism to which Newsjacking is linked.

Due to frequency with which new trends emerge on TikTok, this platform results to be a well of opportunities for companies that want to implement Newsjacking strategies. Here there is the possibility to choose among many trends and to be seen by thousands of users. TikTok operates primarily on an algorithmic basis, unlike other social networks that rely on follower networks, enabling accounts with no followers to quickly gain popularity if their content resonates with the audience (Mljugić and Taboroši, 2022). By posting a TikTok with quality content about an emerging trend, exposure to a large number of users is almost guaranteed.

Using current trends grants companies and brands a sense of authenticity, which not only enhances their recognition but also boosts their competitiveness. As every trend identifies different target groups, their usage strengthens a company's positioning among the population.

"Using a current trend" means to make its imitation: using a particular soundtrack or music, talking about a "hot topic", using a particular video format, and so on. These videos are not directly linked to the news and events featured in the print or digital formats of these media entities, but rather reflect their interpretations of current viral trends (Nover, 2019). The latter is a phenomenon that is lately spreading on the Internet and is being increasingly used for advertising (Mljugić and Taboroši, 2022).

To identify a trend, sound is the most crucial feature; it can include voices, dialogues, songs and so on. The sound feature on TikTok operates similarly to hashtags. By clicking the "Discover" button, users can view trending sounds on the platform. Selecting any sound displays all videos utilizing that specific audio. Furthermore, tapping the circular black music icon at the bottom right of a video reveals all content associated with that sound, facilitating user exploration of related posts (Asiati et al., 2023).

In the next chapter I will display examples of this kind of Newsjacking.

#### **2.4.6 The role of irony in Newsjacking**

Irony is an important component of Newsjacking, but it is not indispensable: when applied, it can make the content more engaging and memorable. However, it's a double-edged sword, because, if it is not well calibrated, it can cause misinterpretations or backlashes, rather than benefits.

But if properly applied, the ironic approach can be an efficient attention-grabber and create a memorable impression on users that can differentiate a brand's message from standard ones. This makes the content stand out in the media landscape, which is often saturated with standard advertising messages.

Of course, the use of irony must be well calibrated with the nature of the event or the trend object of Newsjacking and the target audience of the company: it does not match with all types of brands.

Overall, irony could positively impact Newsjacking efforts, making them more engaging and “sharable”, but it requires careful in never exceeding the limit beyond which the company can go in order not to disrespect anyone.

However, the analysis of the irony employed in Newsjacking still appears to be a topic that has not received much attention, albeit this aspect will be examined in the fourth chapter of this elaborate.

#### **2.4.7 The downside of Newsjacking**

Like everything, even Newsjacking can have negative implications, and, first of all, its temporary nature. New trends are popular today, but they may be forgotten tomorrow, and this makes it challenging to sustain the benefits of marketing research efforts. Trends and breaking news are used to go out of date soon. Once the content is not relevant anymore, people move on to a new topic, and so the company must do (Jonker, 2024).

Moreover, there are many companies using Newsjacking, and if they aren’t promptly responding to news or trend stimuli, their content may be lost in the crowd.

Due to the speed at which Newsjacking is carried out, errors are just around the corner, and the message can be received in the wrong way by the audience. At the same time, the timeframe to decide to join or not a trend and to make your move is really tight. If the company misses the right window of time, all the effort done will be wasted and unnoticed (Jonker, 2024).

Newsjacking is considered a high-risk technique, but at the same time this means a high reward: the more the risk, the higher the reward.

Therefore, it must be borne in mind that Newsjacking tend to yield short-term results: it is really effective to generate an immediate buzz, but it might not be as effective for long-term brand building and customer loyalty (Nolden, 2023).

In addition, an excessively frequent use of Newsjacking will diminish the impact of the messages promoted: posting too often about trending topic and current news can make it seem the company has nothing to say about its brand (Jonker, 2024).

### **2.4.8 Ethics in Newsjacking**

Nowadays, it is difficult for influencer and brands of a certain importance to express themselves without incurring in the public opinion response. Here, takes over the downside of practicing Newsjacking.

Especially when it comes to sensitive topics, it's fundamental to weighing every word and every message widespread. Be "politically correct" is mandatory to do this kind of advertising since the themes concerned are usually sensitive and in the center of public opinion. Who is publishing the content, must try to be impartial or to endorse mass opinion, in order to avoid a negative return of the campaign.

According to WSI-eMarketing Blog, Newsjacking, beyond helping to increase brand awareness, raises three ethical concerns:

1. It may be perceived as lacking in sensitivity and being opportunistic if executed without appropriate discretion. For instance, should a company seek to leverage a tragic event or crisis for its own gain, it may be viewed as lacking in empathy and showing disrespect towards those directly impacted.
2. Newsjacking has the potential to disseminate inaccurate information or fuel the proliferation of misinformation. Engaging in such practices without meticulously verifying the veracity of the underlying news story can irreparably damage an organization's credibility and established reputation.
3. It may be perceived as opportunistic and manipulative, potentially leading to adverse consequences that could undermine the brand's reputation. Consumers are becoming more and more skeptical toward organizations that prioritize financial gain at the expense of social responsibility and ethical considerations.

If the target audience don't like the position the content takes on a particular issue, they will react negatively to it, criticizing and posting unfavorable comments, not only about the content, but also on the company or the influencer that posted it. It is not uncommon for unpleasant incidents to occur of companies or influencers being overwhelmed by an avalanche of criticism for posting the wrong content. For this reason, it is mandatory, for brands deciding to attach themselves to sensitive topics or tragic stories, to exercise caution while promoting any content about (Gripich and Grushevich, (2018).

In an interview released to Burrelles, the PR consultant Michelle Garrett said about it: "If you want to leverage newsjacking, use care. Think it ALL the way through and look at it

from ALL angles. If there's any chance it could appear insensitive, the potential damage you could do to your brand isn't worth the risk. Next, ask yourself if it's a fit. Think first about whether it's something that would be related to your brand. Is it a stretch? If so, it may be better to move on and look for another opportunity". These statements strengthen the fact that even if it is a costless tool, Newsjacking requires lot of effort in terms of attention and care in analyzing news and topic to talk about, and eventually which side to be on.

Even if there is not a universally agreed-upon list or topic to avoid while Newsjacking, there are some categories of news that should be approached with extreme caution; here is a list of the main ones (Loktionova, 2024):

- War and conflicts
- Economic downturns
- Legal issues
- Tragic events
- Public health crisis

Talking about the topics mentioned above is easy to fall into errors, and this can damage your reputation and brand image; these situations require a sensitive and responsible approach, and there's no way to spin them into positive marketing opportunities. Attempting to capitalize on them can be perceived as insensitive and exploitative, as well as unethical, so it's better to post about them only when sure of being uniquely positioned to offer a contribution to the conversation, for example with only an informational purpose. Thus, before newsjacking, it is better to first understand the context and to do some research, to ensure that the intervention on the theme will be constructional and not disruptional.

In the next chapter I will go deeper in the exploration of successful and unsuccessful cases of companies practicing Newsjacking to promote themselves, to better understand the practical application of this technique.



## 3. Real Cases of Newsjacking: Learning from Successful and Unsuccessful Campaigns

« *Carpe diem* »

*Orazio*

### 3.1 Introduction

Newsjacking is a matter of “striking while the iron is hot” (Amendola, 2024); this is the reason why I decided to start this chapter with a quote from the Ode of Carpe Diem, from the Odes of the Latin poet Horace (Odes 1, 11, 8), that literally means “seize the day”. It is the fulfilment of the theory of Benjamin Franklin, according to which “Time is money”: only those Newsjacking campaigns that done with the right content and timing can impact positively on company’s results.

According to Dimitriu and Bahna (2016), its goal is “*about finding a way to be part of the relevant conversations, so that you remain into the spotlight*”.

Even if Newsjacking is a recently born marketing communication technique, many companies and influencer from quite every possible kind of business (fashion industry, cosmetics industry, etc.) have already implemented it in their marketing strategy in many different types and fields.

In this chapter, I will analyze in depth real cases of Newsjacking, comparing the various initiatives and strategies and gleaning insights into the strategies, considerations, and outcomes associated with successful Newsjacking efforts. Each of the cases I will review serves as a lens through which we can analyze the nuances of Newsjacking implementation, from the initial identification of relevant news events to the execution of timely and resonant brand messaging. Some of these cases were successful, others not, but every case is “*sui generis*” and could teach a valuable lesson. It will become apparent that success in this arena requires a delicate balance of creativity, sensitivity, and strategic acumen.

By drawing inspiration from these exemplary instances, marketers and brand strategists can glean valuable lessons to inform their own Newsjacking endeavors and harness the power of real-time relevance in their branding efforts.

## 3.2 Successful examples of Newsjacking

### 3.2.1 Oreo case

One of the most famous and relevant examples of Newsjacking is the one cited at the begin of this elaborate and occurred in 2013 in New Orleans, Louisiana, when, during the Superbowl, one of the most anticipated sporting events of the year, there was a black out by half an hour and Oreo, after a few minutes, posted a tweet about the incident, that went viral in few hours. It was a simple picture of an Oreo in a dark-lighted environment with the comment: *“Power out? No problem. You can still dunk in the dark”* Here, the company cleverly referenced the power outage, making its product an active part of the discussion. With this simple post, Oreo garnered significant shares and earned media impressions, amounting to five times the viewership of the Super Bowl (Allagui and Breslow, 2016).

*“Oreo wins the Super Bowl Newsjacking game”*, this was what the famous “founder” of Newsjacking, David Meerman Scott, wrote about this tweet the day after the event, in 2013. He defined Oreo’s Newsjacking attempt *“the best of the lot”*.



Figure 3: Oreo’s tweet on Twitter, 2013 (@Oreo)

### 3.2.2 McDonald’s, Burger King and Subway case

Another of the most famous examples of newsjacking occurred in June 2023, straddling the spread of ChatGPT, this time with an Out Of Home marketing campaign. In Brazil, McDonald's, Burger King and Subway engaged in a clever marketing battle using ChatGPT-generated advertisements, exploiting the hype for AI.

In the first instance, McDonald's placed a ChatGPT-generated billboard in São Paulo, Brazil, asking it which is the most popular burger of the world, and the A.I. reports the name of the famous BigMac, introduced in 1967 on their menu and still one of their best sellers. At this stage, their main message was transformed into a campaign that leveraged the excitement surrounding the AI tool, evolving the classic slogan "I'm lovin' it" to "A.I.'m lovin' it" to emphasize the innovative use of artificial intelligence.

In response to this campaign, Burger King positioned another ChatGPT-generated billboard next to McDonald's, in which they ask to the A.I. which is the biggest burger of the world, knowing that they win hands down in this respect, and so it was. According to ChatGPT, the Whopper is "considered a robust and satisfying burger" that constitutes a "more substantial meal" (Bolcho, 2023).

At that point, Subway decided to join the conversation: they created a digital mockup of ChatGPT's response showcasing a comparison of their footlong sub to both the Whopper and Big Mac. According to the A.I., both the Whopper and Big Mac are "significantly smaller than a footlong sandwich" (Kiliç, 2023) – the text is also larger in terms of size, and that adds to the international dig at McDonald's and Burger King.



Figure 4: McDonald's, Burger King and Subway's billboards in São Paulo, Brazil

This Newsjacking attempt is based on the rising trend of A.I., in particular ChatGPT, which spread like wildfire in a few months all over the world. McDonald's was among

the pioneers in converting the industry's newfound fascination with ChatGPT prompts into an actual advertising campaign (Casciabanca, 2023).

As attested in the last fact, newsjacking is a communication strategy that can not only be implemented in online communication methods, but also in offline ones, such as OOH.

### 3.2.3 Ryanair case

Ryanair is an Irish low-cost airline founded in 1984, headquartered in Dublin. Known for its budget-friendly travel options, it operates hundreds of routes across Europe and beyond. Ryanair focuses on cost reduction and efficiency, often using smaller airports to keep fares low.

The particularity of this company is its marketing communication strategy on TikTok, centered around engaging and humorous content that showcases the brand's personality and affordable travel options (Abdulrazak and Sheak, 2023). Since opening its account in August 2021, Ryanair (@ryanair) has evolved from being a European low-cost airline to a successful brand on TikTok, amassing 1.5 million followers and 46 million likes (Bake, 2022), and garnering tens of thousands of comments, highlighting its significant impact and engagement on the platform.

The linchpin of this strategy is the use of Millennials' irony and humor, that lead the new generation to share their content. Adopting a markedly self-deprecating tone, Ryanair's communication strategy on TikTok often humorously comments on topics such as their

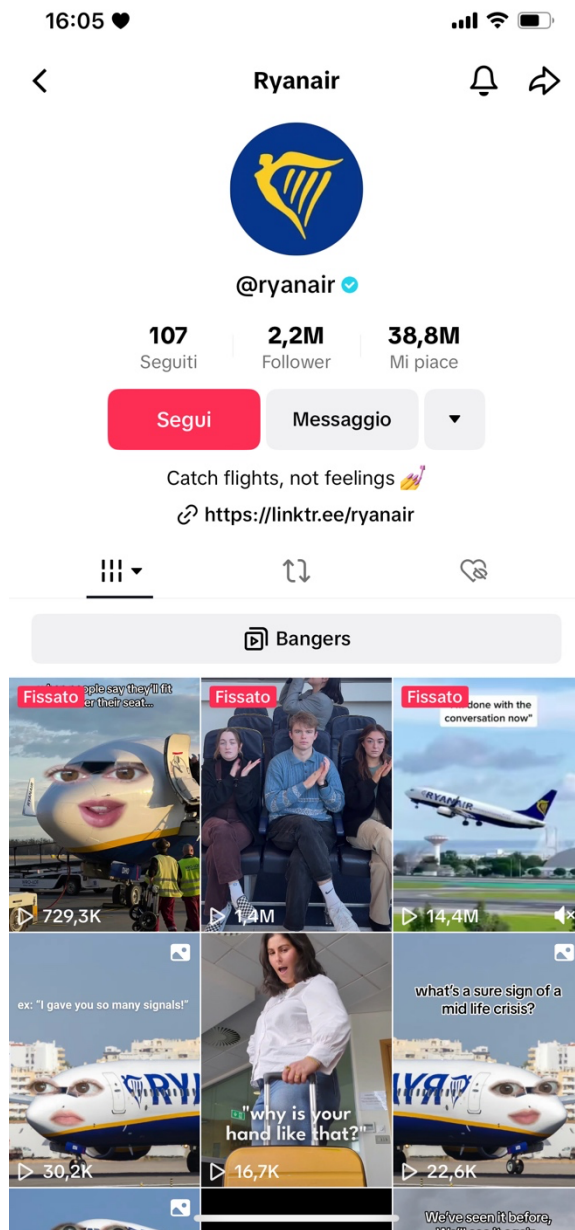


Figure 5: Ryanair's main TikTok account, @ryanair

low-cost ticket prices or the lack of transatlantic flights. The brand also mocks passengers who post *cliché* photos of airplane windows on Instagram, playfully engaging its audience (Bake, 2022), and it was a success. The result is a very high level of users' engagement. The moves that made Ryanair such a "TikTok star" have been revealed by their Head of Social, Micheal Corcoran, in an interview at Bake journal in 2022:

- They approached their audience as creators, not as a corporate entity, adopting a human and playful approach rather than a serious, sales-driven one.
- They studied their audience, going beyond merely counting likes and views, by analyzing user opinions in comments and engaging interactively.
- They chose to innovate, mastering a youthful, broad yet niche field.
- They continuously study trends and monitor the algorithm's behavior, without becoming overly fixated on the rules.

To get closer to users, they have created a real character, who impersonates and represent the Brand: an airplane with eyes and mouth, that must constantly keep up with trends. Their communication strategy aims to create 'sharable' content, which is often memes, most often ironizing about themselves and about their customers. Additionally, they comment on and respond from their own account, stimulating other users' engagement. Many posts are "relatable posts," where users see themselves or empathize, leading them



Figure 6: A post from Ryanair's TikTok account, @ryanair

to share, comment, or simply like the post, thereby increasing the company's brand loyalty (Perniciaro, 2022).

Ryanair's TikTok account focuses even more on addressing the daily criticisms of the airline with a strong sense of self-irony. Rather than apologizing, Ryanair humorously acknowledges these critiques, often justifying them with the rationale of being a low-cost carrier (Perniciaro, 2022).

This is a clear example of Reverse Marketing i.e. those communication strategies that invert the conventional approach to consumer interactions. It is a technique that operates on the principle of naturally attracting consumer to the business. Instead of actively selling to customers, it aims to generate interest and stimulate curiosity through unorthodox methods. This strategy often includes adopting a polemic, critical or provocative attitude towards one's own products, which intrigues the audience and prompts them to explore the reasons behind such unusual communications (Galano, 2022). Through Reverse Marketing, the company appears to be positioning itself against its own brand to capture customer's attention by appealing to the astonishment and curiosity that the word used arouse. This technique also includes mocking the company's own flaws and limitations, which, seeing the social media engagement Ryanair, Clio Make-up, Patagonia, and many others manage to achieve on TikTok by putting it into practice, seems to be appreciated by users. This strategy works, because it is supported by the psychological principle of "reactance", studied by Sanders and Pennebaker in 1976 and according to which human beings tend to react in the opposite way to what is required by others.

In an interview made in 2023 by Piano Social, a social media consultancy company, to the Ryanair Social Media Creator, Camilla Macchia, we can understand why Ryanair Social Media Marketing meets Newsjacking from her words: "Every morning our team carries out a thorough check on the main 'hot topics' being talked about on social media, for each individual platform. We then identify possible insights into how we can use these topics to get people talking about the brand and create a consistent link to Ryanair. [...] If there is a possibility of creating a link between trends and Ryanair, let us then develop creative concepts to come up with content that makes sense, but above all is ironic, irreverent and makes people talk about us."

In her words it is possible to find all the cornerstones on which the Newsjacking technique is based: speed, readiness, irony, tendency.

Ryanair and all the other cases mentioned above are clear examples of successful implementation of Newsjacking technique in a marketing strategy.

### 3.2.4 Mulino Bianco case

In the image below, you can see the famous singer Mahmood, winner of the 2019 and 2022 edition of the Italian music festival, the Sanremo Festival, opening a huge packet of



Figure 7: Mahmood post dedicated to the double platinum, @mahmood

a particular type of biscuits, the “Cileni ripieni di Zucchero”, a gold edition created occasionally only for him, which is not for sale anywhere (Vinci, 2024).

This gift for him was a marketing initiative made by Mulino Bianco after several post on social media ironizing

on the song Mahmood presented at the 2024 edition of the festival: the text of the song is “i gilet neri ripieni di zucchero” (literally: sugar-filled black waistcoats), but due to the speed of the song, most of the people understand “i cileni ripieni di zucchero” (literally: the sugar-filled “Cileni”), mistaking it for a new type of biscuits.

This misunderstanding became a trending topic and a *meme* on social media and people even started to create photomontages assuming the appearance of the phantom bakery products in question (Vinci, 2024).

Mulino Bianco decided to make its move in this regard. They created a huge packet of sugar-filled Cileni especially for Mahmood and they sent it to his house.

The singer posted the video of the biscuits unboxing on his Instagram profile, at the end of a carousel dedicated to the double platinum for the song, and the images became immediately viral, with thousands of likes, comments and reposts. Mahmood told this amused story when he was invited as a guest on Fabio Fazio's program, "*Che tempo che fa*": «Today, guys, I'm not kidding: a box arrived at my house, like 6 feet high, I opened it and it was the package of sugar-filled Cileni», said the singer (Vinci, 2024). He seems to have enthusiastically welcomed the initiative of the confectionery company, showing appreciation for the irony of the situation and for the meme.



Figure 8: a fan's post on X, @gioiarandom

Mahmood has never revealed the contents of the package, so we will never know if there were effectively realized that type of biscuits, but on social media people started also asking the company even to put them on the market.

The newspaper *Corriere della sera* defined the incident «a meme that come true».

The Mulino Bianco marketing stunt was brilliant, they have intercepted the trend and they have exploited the fame and the huge number of the Sanremo festival to become viral, and they succeeded.

This astute move proved once again how important it is able to seize the opportunity and turn it into a success.

### 3.2.5 Gocciolo case

In last weeks, Gocciolo implemented the Newsjacking campaign “E tu da che lato stai?” (literally “And whose side are you on?") centered around a debate initiated by a TikTok user on the correct way to hold Gocciolo biscuits when soaking them in milk. She asked to her followers which was the right side according to them, and this sparked a debate in



the comments, numerous shares and video replies from users who wanted to have their say on the matter.

The controversy captured significant attention on social media, leading to widespread engagement and discussion, and Gocciolo immediately recognized the viral potential: the brand decided to join the conversation on TikTok, further fueling the



Figure 9: Gocciolo's two packaging for the campaign "E tu da che lato stai?"

debate. They presented two new packaging options reflecting both sides of the debate and launching a related contest, which not only amplified their visibility, but also increased interaction with a minimal marketing expenditure.

The campaign is started in April 2024 and will last three months. It is aimed at establishing the official dipping side of Gocciolo biscuits, and their consumers will choose it. For these months, people will find at the supermarket two versions of Gocciolo Chocolate, one for the small side and one for the large side to allow people to choose their favorite side.

The company decided to bring on air the debate on their TV spot, with their two testimonial that support opposite sides and will fight on social media to make their opinion prevail on the other.

Gocciolo droplets rode the Newsjacking to perfection: since the campaign is still ongoing, there are not data about a possible sales increase, but given the engagement numbers achieved on TikTok the results seem promising.

### 3.3 Unsuccessful examples of Newsjacking

As stated in the previous chapter, Newsjacking can also lead to bad effects on the Brand, if not implemented correctly. There are some themes and some vicissitudes touching on

sensitive topics and talk or profit on them could damage the Brand rather than benefiting it, leading to significant public relations blunders. When something bad happens in the world, and brands try to capitalize on the heightened awareness of everyone to sell more products (Baekdal, 2012).

### 3.3.1 DiGiorno Pizza case

DiGiorno Pizza is a reheat-at-home pizza brand and its failed Newjacking attempt occurred in September 2014, when the company posted a *tweet* on Twitter, which stated: “#*WhyIStayed* You had pizza”. Nothing particularly offensive, except that the above-



Figure 10: A tweet from DiGiorno Pizza Twitter account, @DiGiornoPizza

mentioned hashtag was aimed at supporting victims of domestic violence.

Due to recent events, the hashtag #*WhyIStayed* was trendy as a part of a serious and sensitive conversation: people were using it to share personal stories and reasons why victims stay in abusive relationships, sparked by high-profile domestic violence cases in the media, notably involving NFL players like Ray Rice (Meyer, 2015).

The company was already used to advertise themselves through hashtags and trends, but in that occasion, they bet on the wrong horse. This is the reason why ethics must be considered while Newsjacking, if one does not want to incur negative judgements.

The day after, once realized the error, DiGiorno deleted the incriminated post and quickly did another *tweet* explaining the misunderstanding. They «did not read what the hashtag was about», they said, but it wasn't enough to stop the storm of negative effects. After two days spent writing apologies and replying to negative comments, DiGiorno quit

*tweeting* completely for three entire weeks to calm the waters and divert attention from the affair; in this way, people would not have any new post to write angry comments. But



Figure 11: DiGiorno’s apologetic tweet, @DiGiorno

it all came at a price: the growth of followers was stalled, while at the same time competitors were continuing growing (Meyer, 2025).

The main DiGiorno Pizza’s error was the rush to post as fast as possible a content related to that “trend” to such an extent that they did not read what the hashtag was about. This was the reason why their Newsjacking attempt failed.

### 3.3.2 Microsoft case

Another failed attempt which deserves to be mentioned is Microsoft’s. After the death of the famous British singer Amy Winehouse on July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2011, the company posted the *tweet* below:

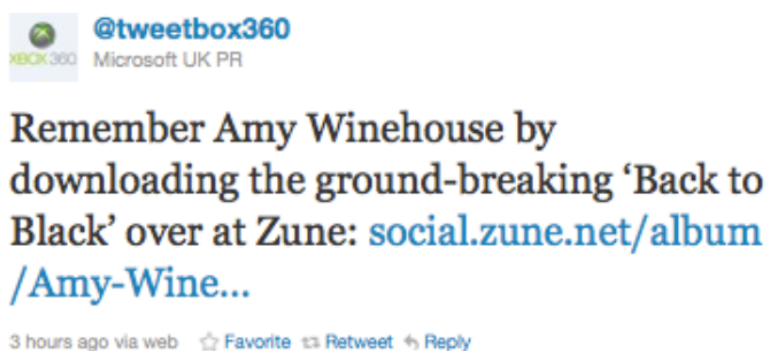


Figure 12: Microsoft’s tweet for Amy Winehouse’s death, on their Twitter account @tweetbox360

They are encouraging Twitter users to purchase Amy Winehouse’s latest album on their music platform Zune, just two days after the British singer's death.

Only two hours later, Microsoft made amends, in another *tweet*: “Apologies to everyone if our earlier Amy Winehouse ‘download’ *tweet* seemed purely commercially motivated. Far from the case, we assure

you”. But the attempt failed, and thousands of *tweets* continued to rain down on their twitter wall. This happened because, as stated in the previous chapter, tragic events, like a death as in this case, could transform a Newsjacking attempt in a media disaster.

However, it is necessary to note that this is not the first time that such commercial actions occur when a showbiz personality leave this world; it happened with Michel Jackson’s death, whose bejeweled glove was sold for thousands of dollars Microsoft was the only one that was condemned, and with Heath Ledger, when after his death the sales of his films skyrocketed. Microsoft was the only one that was condemned, because they did it in a way that was considered too unequivocal (Sciannamblo, 2011).

For instance, in the same period of Microsoft’s post, even Apple decided to make its “tribute” to Amy Winehouse, placing a photograph of the singer on iTunes main page, accompanied by the phrase: “Remember Amy Winehouse”. Amazon was no less: they created an entire section of their website dedicated to the singer, encouraging users to read her biography and news; all very nice, except that the contents were followed by links leading to the download and sales page for “Black to Black”, one of her most famous albums.

Indeed, as expected, the album shot to the top of iTunes ranking in the hours and days following her death, and it has re-entered music top charts five years after its release (THR, 2011).

Despite being morally unethical, using the death of celebrities for commercial purposes seems to be a successful strategy for brands to appeal to consumers' feelings to get them to buy, and it works. The case of Microsoft was in fact an isolated case because it simply got the methods wrong and was criticized for appearing to put profit above human sensitivity during a time of mourning.

### **3.3.3 Gap and American Appeal case**

Gap and American Appeal are two well-known American clothing brands, who, in addition to the industry in which they operate, had in common a media storm that hit them in 2012. When the Hurricane Sandy was battering the east coast of America, they though it was a good opportunity to boost their online shops.

Gap tweeted: “All impacted by #Sandy, stay safe! We’ll be doing lots of Gap.com shopping today. How about you?” featuring a link that encouraged people to visit their

New York store. They were essentially meaning: “come to buy in our store or, if you can’t, go to our online shop and buy there” (Baekdal, 2012).

Twitter users did not like their attempt to make money and the *tweet* was showered with negative comments. In fact, some hours later, Gap deleted the original *tweet* and instead tweeted: “To all impacted by #Sandy, stay safe. Our check-in and tweet earlier were only meant to remind all to keep safe and indoors.”

American Apparel operated differently. They have sent an email to their mailing list offering a 20% discount to all countries impacted by the hurricane: “In case you’re bored during the storm. 20% off every-thing for next 36 hours”. They have not post anything, but they got a severe backlash on twitter: many people condemned the company for seeming to capitalize on a natural disaster that was causing significant difficulties for many, as they did with Gap.



Figure 13: American Apparel commercial initiative for all impacted by hurricane Sandy

Both the commercial initiatives were defined “insensitive” and “in poor taste”, considering the big impact of the hurricane and users expressed their displeasure on them (Adzo, 2024).

Newsjacking in this case can lead to serious damage to companies if their aim is to capitalize on a tragic event such as a natural disaster.

The media analyst Thomas Baekdal commented the facts: “In case of a crisis, you focus on giving instead of taking. And no, giving people a discount is not 'giving', because you are still making money.” For him, and for many others, their offer could not be considered in any case an aid for people impacted by the hurricane.

### **3.4 Conclusions**

In this chapter, we have seen the different possible results to which Newsjacking can really lead through real successful and unsuccessful examples. We saw its power and also its pitfalls. When well used, it can boost brand social media engagement and enhance brand's image and make it relatable by connecting with what is hot in the news. On the other hand, when it misses the mark, it can backfire and have negative effects on the brand.

Furthermore, failures in Newsjacking attempts were more common at the beginning, with its first appearances, when “politically correct” rules were less strict, and it was easier to fall into big slips on social media. Now companies have learned the lesson from their (or other's) past mistakes and have evolved their structure, their marketing and communication teams, in order to get them kept up with recent technologies, trends and, last but not least, with more recent unwritten politically correct rules.

In conclusion, these examples show that newsjacking requires a deep understanding of the context and sensitivity towards the topics being hijacked. Missteps can lead to a loss of trust and damage to a brand's reputation. Thus, it is not only about jumping into a conversation about a trending topic: before diving, it is mandatory for the company to examine the topic and the possible reaction of the audience about it.

In the next chapter will be conducted an experiment aiming to analyze how consumer response to a Newsjacking campaign on the basis of the type of content displayed or the type of brand promoting that campaign.

## 4. Experimental Research

### 4.1 Theoretical background

In the previous chapter, I have established the theoretical frameworks of the Newsjacking content. I explored the advertising landscape, traditional and innovative communication methods, with a special focus on Newsjacking, subject of this experimental study; we have been able to have an overview of what it is and the context in which it raised.

Hence, I now want to go further the current literature and explore this topic, focusing on how different brands can implement this technique in different way and how people react to it.

In this chapter, I will describe the quantitative experiment conducted on Newsjacking and its results, with relative limitations and managerial implications. Furthermore, I will present and describes the methodology used for the good conduct of the study, step by step, from the design of the survey to the analysis of the findings.

#### 4.1.1 Literature Review

Departing from Newsjacking first comparison in the literature with the famous David Scott's book "Newsjacking: How to Inject Your Ideas into a Breaking News Story and Generate Tons of Media Coverage" in 2011, while its general efficacy has been widely documented (Muthukodiarachchi and M.A.M.C. Senarathna, 2023), few studies have been done about the impacts of the various stylistic approaches in Newsjacking campaigns, in particular the use of irony.

Irony, as a rhetorical device, has been increasingly recognized for its potential to enhance brand communication by creating memorable interactions (Kreuz & Roberts, 2017). Recent studies stated that irony can cultivate a sense of exclusivity and intellectual engagement, promoting stronger emotional connections between brands and their audiences (Dynel, 2018). However, its effectiveness in the field of Newsjacking need for further focused investigation.

Contemporary research has shown various aspects on Newsjacking and its implications for brand strategy (Aaker et al., 2020), like the fact that people who recognize the news story displayed in the Newsjacking content demonstrate higher levels of attitude toward the content, brand attitude and purchase intention (Angell et al., 2020). The *ratio* under

these results is that people who are already familiar with the news story are able to “decode the message”, and the immediate consequence is the main pillar of Newsjacking: the news used must be a viral one, in order to ensure that as many viewers as possible can decode the message, and markets should be able to recognize it. Given that, the doubt rightly was: on the opposite side, do people unable to decode the message have a negative response to the Newsjacking campaign? Pre-existing research demonstrated that without cryptic news references, failing to recognize the news do not penalize unfairly the brand (Angell et al., 2020).

While the positive impact of humor in marketing is well-established and investigated in contemporary research (Warren & McGraw, 2016), together with other various aspects mentioned above, the effects that irony can have on real time marketing scenario, are less understood. As a consequence, an evident research gap has been identified in understanding consumers’ response to different Newsjacking campaigns, in particular if their response change on the basis of the kind of brand that promote the campaign and its type of content; moreover, even how the role of the brand-content fit between these two variables influences consumers’ response hasn’t been investigated in previous research. So, in this experiment, I will explore the relationship between the use of *irony* in Newsjacking campaigns and consumers’ response toward both the ad and the brand, which will decline in five different dependent variables: *like*, *engagement*, *social media engagement*, *attitude* and *word of mouth*.

In this study, irony will be identified as the independent variable *content type*, and it is categorized into irony vs seriousness.

Moreover, the alignment between the ironic content and the brand’s identity, known as *brand-content fit*, plays a crucial mediating role between the independent variable and the dependent variables, which represents consumers’ response.

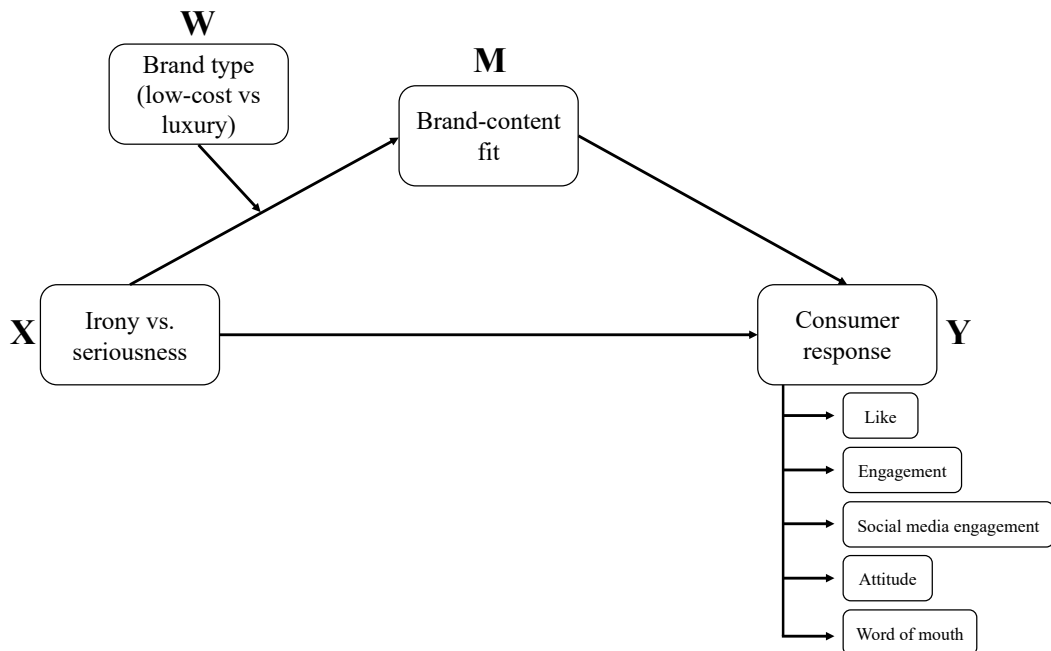
Additionally, the *type of brand* – low-cost vs luxury – may significantly moderate the relationship between the use of irony and consumers’ response. The scope is to understand if luxury brands, which rely on a high standard of exclusivity and elegance, may or not utilize irony, compared to low-cost brands that emphasize affordability and relatability and, on the other hand, if low-cost brands should leverage more on this powerful tool.

Addressing these gaps, the present study aims to explore the following research question:



“How does the use of irony vs. seriousness in a Newsjacking campaign affect consumers’ response? And how does the type of brand influence this relationship? Finally, to what extent the fit between the Newsjacking content and the creator’s brand help to explain the relationship between the use of irony (vs. seriousness) and consumer responses?”

The related conceptual model is the following, that will be repeated for every dependent variable displayed as in the scheme below:



This conceptual model encloses five different models, one for every dependent variable analyzed. Together they represent the consumer’s response to a Newsjacking campaign. The first dependent variable, *like*, indicates the level of liking of the Ad, that in the case of the present experiment is an Instagram post.

The second one is *engagement*, and it represents how the consumer is likely to “put a like” on the post displayed.

The third dependent variable, *social media engagement*, indicates the users' engagement on that particular Ad and on the Brand's feed, measuring for example share, follower and profile visits.

The fourth is *attitude*, that indicates the general opinion of the consumer after being exposed to the Ad.

The last dependent variable is *word of mouth* and indicates the measure in which consumer are likely to generate a positive word of mouth about the brand.

Given these fundamental premises, this study seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the strategic use of irony in Newsjacking campaigns, trying to offer valuable insights for marketers aiming to enhance brand engagement, in particular on social media, through an innovative communication technique.

## **4.2 Methodology**

In this section, I will describe the methodology adopted for the experiment, particularly the data collection process and the shape of the experiment.

### **4.2.1 Methodological approach**

The present experimental study uses a conclusive causal between-subjects 2x2 research design. The results of the experiment are based on participants' answers to a questionnaire obtained through an independently administered survey conducted in Italy during the month of May 2024 using the online platform Qualtrics XM. The sampling technique adopted in this study is a non-probabilistic. As the questionnaire was distributed in Italy, it was delivered in Italian, in order to break down any language barriers.

### **4.2.2 Data collection and questionnaire composition**

To conduct the experimental study, it was necessary to develop a questionnaire consisting of 39 questions of which 37 were specific and 2 demographics.

In order to manipulate the independent variable (irony: ironic content vs serious content) and the moderator variable (type of brand: low-cost vs serious), it was necessary to create four visual stimuli, each one different from the other.

The first scenario appears to be an image of a sponsored Instagram post on a low-cost airline company's feed depicting the influencer Chiara Ferragni and a breaking news about her. The caption of this post is characterized by an ironic and confidential language. The second scenario appears to be an image of a sponsored Instagram post on a luxury airline company's feed depicting the new Rector of "Università Statale di Milano", Marina Brambilla, and a breaking news about her. The caption of this post is characterized by a serious and formal language.

The third scenario appears to be an image of a sponsored Instagram post on a luxury airline company's feed depicting the influencer Chiara Ferragni and a breaking news about her. The caption of this post is characterized by an ironic and confidential language. The fourth scenario appears to be an image of a sponsored Instagram post on a low-cost airline company's feed depicting the new Rector of "Università Statale di Milano", Marina Brambilla, and a breaking news about her. The caption of this post is characterized by a serious and formal language.

As mentioned above, data were collected by means of a questionnaire, which is divided into four main parts.

At the beginning of the questionnaire, a brief introduction was made with an explanation of the academic purpose of the experimental research.

The second part of the survey is a randomized block consisting of four separate scenarios. Specifically, the randomization process was essential within the structure of the questionnaire in order to achieve a uniform number of exposures to all four visual stimuli. Online newspapers reporting content related to a current events about the two subjects mentioned above were presented: in particular, who saw the breaking news about Chiara Ferragni, then saw a mock-up of an Instagram post about her, posted by a low-cost or a luxury brand, while who saw breaking news about Marina Brambilla, then saw a mock-up of an Instagram post about her, posted by a low-cost or a luxury brand.

Furthermore, in order to avoid potential cognitive bias and possible conditioning related to brand sentiment, all scenarios are characterized by the use of the same fictitious brand, created *ad hoc* for the development of the questionnaire: Blue Airline. Therefore, following this assumption, all visual conditions were realized through the use of the Online platform Canva.



In the images above, there are the Instagram mock-up posts used in the questionnaire; the first one on the left side is related to the news of Chiara Ferragni and Balocco fraud, and the second one in the right side is related to the news about the new Rector of “Università Statale di Milano”.

The third part of the survey has been introduced to respondents after they had been subjected to one of the four scenarios above. In particular, this block of the questionnaire consists of 37 questions, divided as following:

- 9 questions concerning the dependent variables: 1 about *like*, one about *engagement*, 3 about *social media engagement*, 1 about *attitude* and 3 about *word of mouth*.
- 5 questions related to two mediators: 2 about the *content-brand fit* and 3 about *attention*.
- 1 question about the attention check.
- 2 questions related to the manipulation check, one for the brand and one for the news.
- 5 questions regarding the control variable, about the attention given by respondents to breaking news.

All questions were rated using a 7-point Likert scale.

The scale related to the dependent variables *like*, *engagement* and *social media engagement* derive from the pre-validated scale “Social Media Engagement Scale (SMES)” of Cheung and Lee (2010)

The scale related to the dependent variable *attitude* derives from the pre-validated scale “Attitude Toward the Brand in the Ad” of Kim, Haley, and Koo (2009).

The scale related to the dependent variable *word of mouth* derives from the pre-validated scale “Word-of-Mouth” of Grégoire and Fisher (2008).

The scale related to the first mediator *fit* derives from the pre-validated scale “Fit” of Ahluwalia and Gurhan-Canli (2000).

The scale related to the second mediator *attention* derive from the pre-validated scale “Ad Message Involvement” of Chang Chingching (2009).

The last scale is related to the control variable *attention to breaking news*, and it derive from the pre-validated scale “Perception of Breaking News and Sensationalism” of Pelau, Pop, Stanescu & Sanda (2023).

All the scales just mentioned have been readjusted according to the needs of experimental research.

Finally, the last part of the questionnaire is characterized by the block dedicated to demographic questions, in which both the gender and age of the respondents were asked.

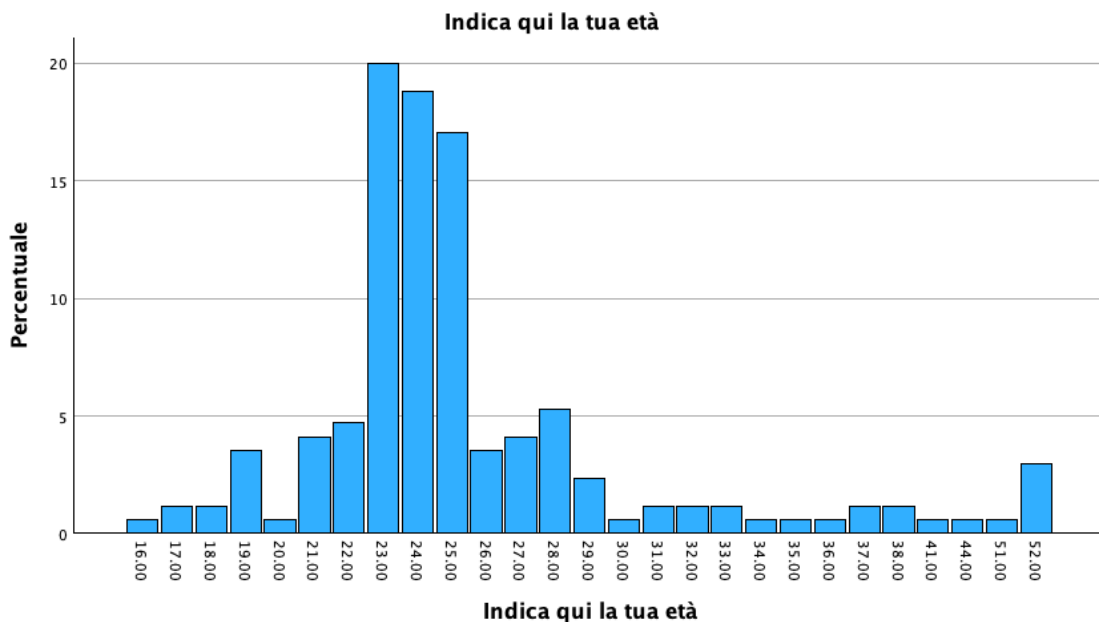
### 4.3 Experimental results

In this section, I will describe the results of the experiment, starting from the data analysis and hypotheses results.

#### 4.3.1 Participants and sampling procedure

The questionnaire was distributed to 191 individuals, of which 170 fully participated answering to all questions asked. During the data cleaning process, any case with missing values was excluded from the analysis. The data were collected through an anonymous link generated by the Qualtrics XM online platform and shared via various instant messaging platforms and social media, including WhatsApp, Instagram and Facebook. The sample of the target population reached by the survey included mainly students, graduated and newly employed university students located in different cities in Italy. Therefore, the participants reported a mean age of 26 years, although the age range went from a minimum of 16 to a maximum of 52 years.

Considering the target sample, it was decided to include respondents of all age and gender groups, since demographic variables were not expected to influence the results of the experiment in a statistically significant manner.



For what is concerning participants' gender, the prevailing was female, represented by 58.2% (frequency), while the male gender was represented by 37.1%. The remaining 9%

of the respondents either selected the third gender/non-binary option (2.8%) or preferred not to identify with a specific gender (3%).

#### 4.3.2 Data Analysis

The data collected through the questionnaire provided by the online platform Qualtrics XM were exported to the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) software for the analysis process.

First of all, it was conducted a reliability test to verify the level of reliability of the scales used in the conceptual model. Specifically, the value of the Cronbach Alpha of all the construct was observed, to verify that it was greater than 60% ( $\alpha > 0.6$ ). Respectively, the following values of Cronbach Alpha were observed:

- For the scale of the dependent variable *social media engagement*, the value observed was 0.698;
- For the scale of the dependent variable *word of mouth*, the value observed was 0.938.

As a result, both scales were confirmed to be reliable.

Then, descriptive statistics were made to observe the mean and the standard deviation of the variables in the model, as in the table below:

	<b>mean</b>	<b>standard deviation</b>
<i>Brand-content fit</i>	3.7735	1.67302
<i>Like</i>	3.5353	1.21209
<i>Engagement</i>	3.6941	1.28739
<i>Social media engagement</i>	3.3470	1.20829
<i>Attitude</i>	4.0647	1.34624
<i>Word of mouth</i>	3.5745	1.32938

Once completed descriptive statistics, the main assumptions of the conceptual model were examined, in order to confirm or reject the hypotheses of the research question, verifying their statistical significance, and thus their relative success.

As the independent variable X (*content type: irony vs seriousness*) and the moderator W (*brand type: low-cost vs luxury*) are of categorical nominal nature, they were coded into two conditions for each as following:

- For the independent variable:
  - Seriousness = 0
  - Irony = 1
- For the moderator:
  - Low-cost = 0
  - Luxury = 1

After the coding, it was run a digression analysis applying the Model 1 of the SPSS Process Macro version 4.2 extension developed by Andrew F. Hayes to verify the statistical significance of the direct moderation hypothesis, in order to test the effect of the independent variable X (*content type: irony vs seriousness*) on the first dependent variable Y1 (*like*). Specifically, to demonstrate the statistical significance of both these hypotheses, it was adopted a 95% confidence interval with a reference value of  $\alpha$  equal to 5% and it was necessary to ensure that for each hypotheses the extremes of the confidence range LLCI (Lower Level of Confidence Interval) and ULCI (Upper Level of Confidence Interval) have respected the concordance of sign, so that they are both positive or both negative and no 0 passed within. Finally, to verify the sign and the magnitude of the effects, the coefficients  $\beta$  of both the effects were observed.

***Outcome variable: like***

Model	coefficient	se	p
<b>Constant</b>	3.1458	0.1700	0.0000
<b>Content type</b>	0.7431	0.2597	0.0048
<b>Brand type</b>	0.7020	0.2430	0.0044
<b>Interaction</b>	-1.2659	0.3637	0.0006

From the table of the outcome variable like above is it possible to see the results of the direct effect between the independent variable X and the dependent variable Y1 (*like*).



In particular, is it possible to see that the independent variable (*content type: irony vs seriousness*) has a positive and significant effect, with a regression coefficient  $\beta$  of 0.7431 and a p-value of 0.0048. Then, is it possible to observe a positive and significant effect of the type of brand, with a coefficient  $\beta$  of 0.7020 and a p-value of 0.0044. Moreover, the interaction between the independent variable X (*content type*) and the moderator W (*brand type*) is significant with a p-value of 0.0006.

***Conditional effect of the focal predictor at values of the moderator***

Type of brand	effect	se	p
<b>0</b>	0.7431	0.2597	0.0048
<b>1</b>	-0.5228	0.2546	0.0416

Moving then on the joint interaction between the independent variable X and the moderator W (*brand type*) toward the dependent variable Y1 (*like*), it is possible to observe from the values that when the moderator is coded with 0 (Brand low-cost) there is a positive and significant effect of 0.7431 on Y1, with a p-value of 0.0048. On the contrary, when it is coded with 1 (Brand luxury) there is a negative and significant effect of -0.5228, with a p-value of 0.0416. So, when the brand is low cost, it is more effective to use irony content, while with a luxury brand it more effective a serious content. Thus, it can be concluded that brand type significantly moderates the relationship between content type and like.

Moving on, it was run the same digression analysis as in the previous model, considering now the second dependent variable Y2 (*engagement*).

***Outcome variable: engagement***

Model	coefficient	se	p
<b>Constant</b>	3.3542	0.1818	0.0000
<b>Content type</b>	0.5625	0.2777	0.0444
<b>Brand type</b>	0.7328	0.2598	0.0054
<b>Interaction</b>	-1.1995	0.3889	0.0024

From the table of the outcome variable engagement above is it possible to see the results of the direct effect between the independent variable X and the dependent variable Y2 (*engagement*). Even here the independent variable (*content type: irony vs seriousness*) has a positive and significant effect, with a regression coefficient  $\beta$  of 0.5625 and a p-value of 0.0444. Then, is it possible to observe a positive and significant effect of the type of brand, with a coefficient  $\beta$  of 0.7328 and a p-value of 0.0054. Moreover, the interaction between the independent variable X (*content type*) and the moderator W (*brand type*) is significant with a p-value of 0.0024.

***Conditional effect of the focal predictor at values of the moderator***

Type of brand	effect	se	p
0	0.5625	0.2777	0.0444
1	-0.6370	0.2723	0.0205

Considering now the joint interaction effect of the independent variable X and the moderator W (*brand type*) toward the dependent variable Y2 in the table above, it is possible to observe from the values that when the moderator is coded with 0 (Brand low-cost) there is a positive and significant effect on Y2, with a regression coefficient  $\beta$  of 0.5625 and a p-value of 0.0444. Whereas, when it is coded with 1 (Brand luxury) there is a negative and significant effect of -0.6370, with a p-value of 0.0205. Also in this case, when the brand is low cost, the use of irony generates more engagement, while with a luxury brand it more effective a serious content. Thus, it can be concluded that brand type significantly moderates the relationship between content type and engagement.

The analysis was repeated other three times, one for each remaining dependent variable of the model. The results observed for the third dependent variable Y3 (*social media engagement*) were analogous to those just mentioned, while for the remaining dependent variables Y4 (*attitude*) and Y5 (*word of mouth*) the results were different. In particular, starting from an ironic scenario, there is a negative effect when the moderator W (*brand type*) assumes a value of 1 (Brand luxury) with respect to the dependent variables *attitude* and *word of mouth*, whereas there would be a positive effect when the moderator assumes a value of 0 (Brand low-cost) if we chose alpha equal to 10% with a confidence interval

of 90%, having respectively a p-value of 0.0644 and 0.0985 would be smaller than 0.10 and thus be significant. In this case, we can conclude that the effect of the moderator when it assumes a value of 0 (Brand low-cost) is marginally significant.

Then, to test the statistical significance of the conceptual model, it was conducted a regression analysis by applying the Model 7 of the SPSS Process Macro version 4.2 extension developed by Andrew F. Hayes to test the direct, mediating and moderating effect of the variables used in the conceptual model of this experiment. In particular, it will be tested *brand-content fit* (M) mediating role between the independent variable X (*content type: irony vs seriousness*) and the dependent variable Y1 (like).

***Outcome variable: brand-content fit***

Model	coefficient	se	p
<b>Constant</b>	3.1354	0.2206	0.0000
<b>Content type</b>	1.5174	0.3370	0.0000
<b>Brand type</b>	1.2450	0.3154	0.0001
<b>Interaction</b>	-2.8478	0.4719	0.0000

In the table above, it is possible to observe the values obtained in the outcome variable fit. In particular, the independent variable (*content type: irony vs seriousness*) has a positive and significant effect on the mediator M (*brand-content fit*), with a regression coefficient  $\beta$  of 1.5174 and a p-value of 0.0000. Even the moderator W (*brand type: low-cost vs luxury*) has a positive and significant effect, with a regression coefficient  $\beta$  of 1.2450 and a p-value of 0.0001. Moreover, the interaction between the independent variable X (*content type*) and the moderator W (*brand type*) on the mediator M (*brand-content fit*) is negative and significant, with a p-value of 0.0000. Therefore, this regression effect can be considered statistically significant.

***Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator***

Type of brand	effect	se	p
<b>0</b>	1.5174	0.3370	0.0000
<b>1</b>	-1.3304	0.3304	0.0001

From the table above, it is possible to observe the conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator. In particular, when the moderator W (*brand type*) is coded with 0 (Brand low-cost) there is a positive and significant effect of the independent variable X on the mediator M (*brand-content fit*), with a regression coefficient  $\beta$  of 1.5174 and a p-value of 0.0000. Contrarily, when the moderator W (*brand type*) is coded with 1 (Brand luxury) there is a negative significant effect of the independent variable X on the mediator M (*brand-content fit*), with a regression coefficient  $\beta$  of -1.3304 and a p-value of 0.0001.

***Outcome variable: like***

Model	coefficient	se	p
<b>Constant</b>	2.1444	0.2123	0.0000
<b>Content type</b>	0.0796	0.1632	0.6225
<b>Brand-content fit</b>	0.3592	0.0486	0.0000

Moreover, from the table above it is possible to observe that the mediator M (*brand-content fit*) has a positive and significant effect on the dependent variable Y1 (*like*), with a regression coefficient  $\beta$  of 0.3592 and a p-value of 0.0000. Considering the results observed in the tables, both sections of the indirect effect resulted statistically significant, and consequently it was possible to decree the overall success of the mediation effect. Finally, it was observed a negative and significant index of moderated mediation of -1.0228, which means that *brand-content fit* mediates the relationship between the independent variable X (*content type*) and this mediation is moderated by the type of brand.

The analysis was repeated other four times, one for each remaining dependent variable of the model. In the first model, we observed a full mediation, due to the fact that the direct

effect of the independent variable is not significant anymore when the mediator is included in the model. The results observed for the dependent variables Y2 (engagement), Y3 (*social media* engagement) and Y5 (*word of mouth*) were analogous to those just mentioned, while in the fourth dependent variable Y4 (*attitude*) there was a partial mediation, due to the statistical significance of the direct effect.

#### **4.4 General discussion and conclusion**

In this section I will discuss the results of the analysis described in the previous section. Moreover, I will describe the theoretical contributions of this thesis, the related managerial implications, up to limitations and further research.

##### **4.4.1 Theoretical contributions**

This elaborate seeks to provide a theoretical contribution to the field of marketing communication, in particular extending the existing body of knowledge on Newsjacking by introducing a new element, irony, already used in the practice, but still unexplored in the literature. As mentioned above, while previous research has highlighted the general efficacy of this technique (Angell et al., 2020; Aaker et al., 2020), this study aims to add a piece to the existing puzzle of Newsjacking, by examining in-depth the various variable that influence consumers' response to a Newsjacking campaign.

Furthermore, this research aims also contribute to the previous literature by Fleck & Quester (2007) about the impact of brand-content fit on consumer perception, which assesses that the “congruence” between the content and the creator’s brand “plays a significant role in determining the effectiveness of this particular communication technique”.

Moreover, this research seeks to analyze the moderation role of brand type, differentiating between low-cost brands and luxury brands. Such differentiation helps to build up the understanding of how brand type might influence the way and the context in which irony can be used. In particular, the results observed provided empirical evidence supporting the idea that low-cost brand and luxury brands may use different approaches to irony in their marketing strategy (Kapferer & Bastien, 2017).

This elaborate also contributed to the investigation of the role of irony, already introduced in the literature by both Veale & Gosh (2018) and Dynel (2018), enriching it with a focus

on its application to the practice of Newsjacking, filling the gap between research in rhetoric and its application in the real marketing field.

The just mentioned contributions, in addition to seek to fill the gap in the contemporary research, also aspires to offer practical implications for marketers aiming to approach to the complex landscape of innovative marketing communication techniques.

#### **4.4.2 Managerial implications**

In this elaborate, irony has been deemed to work as a potentially impactful stylistic element in Newsjacking campaigns, and this could be a starting point for marketers who want to use this potential tool to increase their brand engagement and visibility, including it in their communication strategy.

On the other hand, irony is not a tool that can fit every type of brand: as observed in the experiment conducted, *brand-content fit* plays a mediating role between the *content type* and consumers' response, so, when handled in the “wrong” way, irony can even have a negative effect on consumers' response to the campaign, or worse on the brand. Thus, marketers should carefully consider the fit between the content and their brand while shaping a Newsjacking campaign, in order to ensure that the message resonates with the target audience, that should be able to decode the message displayed in the campaign. This requires a deep understanding of the brand identity and the cultural context in which the brand operates, that must be aligned with the tone and the style of the Newsjacking campaign. This alignment can enhance stronger emotional connections with consumers, driving brand loyalty.

Furthermore, the moderating role of brand type, shown in the conceptual model analyzed in the experiment, puts emphasis on the fact that brands should consider the particular positioning and expectations of the audience to employ Newsjacking effectively. Hence, luxury brands may require a more subtle and sophisticated, or even better, no approach to irony while shaping their Newsjacking campaigns, with a less *in-yer-face* style than low-cost brands, that should be able to use irony in a pure fun and direct way, more in tune with the brand personality of accessible brands.

Anyway, as shown from the results, most respondents did not like the association between luxury brands and Newsjacking campaigns at all, both with the ironic and serious content. For this reason, it can be concluded that Newsjacking works best with low-cost brands,

and, particularly, when it is associated with the use of irony. As a consequence, low-cost brands should implement Newsjacking campaigns using an ironic and confidential tone of voice.

Those brands which want to implement Newsjacking strategies should invest in tools for tracking and analyzing news events and consumers' attitudes and sentiments toward them. Moreover, they should also invest in tool for tracking trending topics on social media, in order to implement Trendjacking campaigns, enhancing brand visibility. It is important for those brands to be alert and adaptive to newer trends and discussions to catch the right moment to *newsjack*, but not before having first examined the trend or the news to avoid getting caught "on the wrong side" of the story.

#### **4.4.3 Limitations and further research**

The most notable limitation encountered in the course of the experiment is the challenge of finding news stories that are entirely free from any cognitive bias. Due to the inherent subjectivity in news reporting and interpretation, there is a risk that the chosen news story may introduce biases into the study. Despite the efforts made to mitigate this limitation through a careful selection, it remains an area of concern.

Moreover, the general applicability of the findings may be limited by the specific demographics and characteristics of the sample investigated. This means that the results may not fully capture the vastness of consumer responses across different context and cultural backgrounds.

For what is concerning possible further research, qualitative studies on both consumers and marketers' perspectives could offer richer insights about the response to a Newsjacking campaign, from one side, and its creation and decision-making process, from the other.

Other further research about the effect of different type of news (for example: gossip news, sport news, chronicle news, and so on) could provide significant insight regarding which kind of news fits better with the technique of Newsjacking.

Furthermore, as there is a multitude of brands that are positioned between low-cost brands and luxury brands, such as Bridge and Masstige brands, so it could be investigated how those brands should approach Newsjacking technique.

Finally, as in this research has been used a fictitious brand called Blue Airlines, it would be interesting to repeat the study using real existing brands, in order to make respondent better associate the content proposed and the creator's brand, and so better understand the fit between them, to get more precise results and insights about the effects of the conceptual model.





# Appendix

## Descriptive statistics: Age

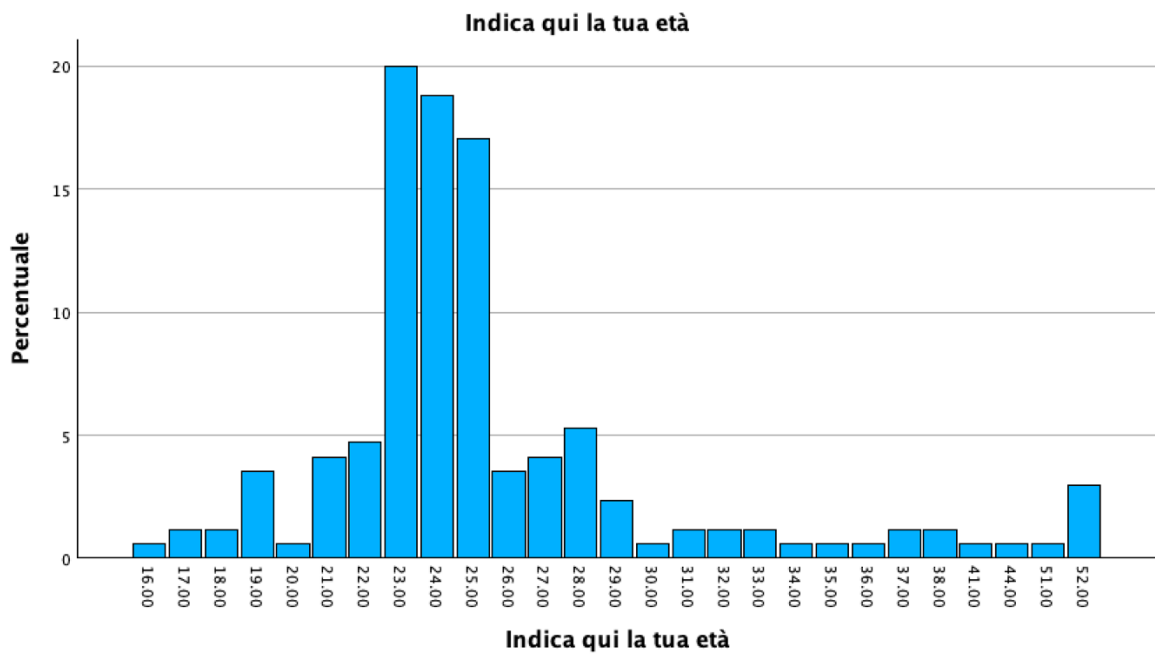
### Statistiche

et\_

N	Valido	170
	Mancante	0
Media		25.9059
Mediana		24.0000
Modalità		23.00
Deviazione std.		6.49465
Varianza		42.180
Intervallo		36.00
Minimo		16.00
Massimo		52.00

et\_

		et_			
		Frequenza	Percentuale	Percentuale valida	Percentuale cumulativa
Valido	16.00	1	.6	.6	.6
	17.00	2	1.2	1.2	1.8
	18.00	2	1.2	1.2	2.9
	19.00	6	3.5	3.5	6.5
	20.00	1	.6	.6	7.1
	21.00	7	4.1	4.1	11.2
	22.00	8	4.7	4.7	15.9
	23.00	34	20.0	20.0	35.9
	24.00	32	18.8	18.8	54.7
	25.00	29	17.1	17.1	71.8
	26.00	6	3.5	3.5	75.3
	27.00	7	4.1	4.1	79.4
	28.00	9	5.3	5.3	84.7
	29.00	4	2.4	2.4	87.1
	30.00	1	.6	.6	87.6
	31.00	2	1.2	1.2	88.8
	32.00	2	1.2	1.2	90.0
	33.00	2	1.2	1.2	91.2
	34.00	1	.6	.6	91.8
	35.00	1	.6	.6	92.4
	36.00	1	.6	.6	92.9
37.00	2	1.2	1.2	94.1	
38.00	2	1.2	1.2	95.3	
41.00	1	.6	.6	95.9	
44.00	1	.6	.6	96.5	
51.00	1	.6	.6	97.1	
52.00	5	2.9	2.9	100.0	
Totale		170	100.0	100.0	



## Descriptive statistics: Gender

### Statistiche

Genere

N	Valido	170
	Mancante	0
Modalità		2

### Genere

		Frequenza	Percentuale	Percentuale valida	Percentuale cumulativa
Valido	Maschio	63	37.1	37.1	37.1
	Femmina	99	58.2	58.2	95.3
	Genere non-binario / Terzo genere	5	2.9	2.9	98.2
	Preferisco non dirlo	3	1.8	1.8	100.0
Totale		170	100.0	100.0	



## Descriptive statistics: Variables

### Statistiche descrittive

	N	Minimo	Massimo	Media	Deviazione std.
MED	170	1.00	7.00	3.7735	1.67302
DV1	170	1.00	6.00	3.5353	1.21209
DV2	170	1.00	7.00	3.6941	1.28739
DV3	170	1.00	6.67	3.3470	1.20829
DV4	170	2.00	7.00	4.0647	1.34624
DV5	170	1.00	6.67	3.5745	1.32938
Numero di casi validi (listwise)	170				

## Reliability Analysis: Social media engagement

### Riepilogo elaborazione casi

		N	%
Casi	Valido	170	100.0
	Escluso <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Totale	170	100.0

a. Eliminazione listwise basata su tutte le variabili nella procedura.

### Statistiche di affidabilità

Alpha di Cronbach	Alpha di Cronbach basata su elementi standardizzati	N. di elementi
.698	.705	3

### Statistiche degli elementi

	Media	Deviazione std.	N
social_1	3.01	1.505	170
social_2	3.02	1.372	170
social_3	4.33	1.572	170

### Matrice di correlazione tra gli elementi

	social_1	social_2	social_3
social_1	1.000	.559	.304
social_2	.559	1.000	.466
social_3	.304	.466	1.000

### Statistiche degli elementi di riepilogo

	Media	Minimo	Massimo	Intervallo	Massimo/minimo	Varianza	N. di elementi
Medie elementi	3.453	3.006	4.329	1.324	1.440	.576	3
Varianze elementi	2.206	1.881	2.471	.590	1.313	.090	3
Covarianze tra gli elementi	.959	.720	1.154	.434	1.602	.039	3

### Statistiche elemento-totale

	Media scala se viene eliminato l'elemento	Varianza scala se viene eliminato l'elemento	Correlazione elemento-totale corretta	Correlazione multipla quadratica	Alpha di Cronbach se viene eliminato l'elemento
social_1	7.35	6.360	.494	.315	.631
social_2	7.34	6.177	.633	.409	.466
social_3	6.03	6.455	.432	.220	.715

## Reliability Analysis: Word of mouth

### Riepilogo elaborazione casi

		N	%
Casi	Valido	170	100.0
	Escluso <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Totale	170	100.0

a. Eliminazione listwise basata su tutte le variabili nella procedura.

### Statistiche di affidabilità

Alpha di Cronbach	Alpha di Cronbach basata su elementi standardizzati	N. di elementi
.938	.939	3

### Statistiche degli elementi

	Media	Deviazione std.	N
wom_1	3.57	1.362	170
wom_2	3.47	1.423	170
wom_3	3.68	1.441	170

### Matrice di correlazione tra gli elementi

	wom_1	wom_2	wom_3
wom_1	1.000	.868	.837
wom_2	.868	1.000	.803
wom_3	.837	.803	1.000

### Statistiche degli elementi di riepilogo

	Media	Minimo	Massimo	Intervallo	Massimo/minimo	Varianza	N. di elementi
Medie elementi	3.575	3.471	3.682	.212	1.061	.011	3
Varianze elementi	1.986	1.856	2.076	.220	1.119	.013	3
Covarianze tra gli elementi	1.658	1.644	1.683	.039	1.024	.000	3

### Statistiche elemento-totale

	Media scala se viene eliminato l'elemento	Varianza scala se viene eliminato l'elemento	Correlazione elemento-totale corretta	Correlazione multipla quadratica	Alpha di Cronbach se viene eliminato l'elemento
wom_1	7.15	7.397	.898	.809	.891
wom_2	7.25	7.220	.871	.773	.911
wom_3	7.04	7.247	.849	.725	.929



# Regression Analysis: Model 1 for the first dependent variable *like*

Run MATRIX procedure:

\*\*\*\*\* PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 4.2 beta \*\*\*\*\*

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D.      www.afhayes.com  
Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

\*\*\*\*\*

Model : 1  
Y : DV1  
X : IV  
W : MOD

Sample  
Size: 170

\*\*\*\*\*

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

DV1

Model Summary

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.2696	.0727	1.3870	4.3363	3.0000	166.0000	.0057

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.1458	.1700	18.5061	.0000	2.8102	3.4815
IV	.7431	.2597	2.8616	.0048	.2304	1.2557
MOD	.7020	.2430	2.8889	.0044	.2222	1.1818
Int_1	-1.2659	.3637	-3.4809	.0006	-1.9839	-.5479

Product terms key:

Int\_1 : IV x MOD

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):

	R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p
X+W	.0677	12.1167	1.0000	166.0000	.0006

Focal predict: IV (X)  
Mod var: MOD (W)

Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator(s):

MOD	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.0000	.7431	.2597	2.8616	.0048	.2304	1.2557
1.0000	-.5228	.2546	-2.0534	.0416	-1.0255	-.0201

\*\*\*\*\* ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS \*\*\*\*\*

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:

95.0000

----- END MATRIX -----

## Regression Analysis: Model 1 for the second dependent variable *engagement*

Run MATRIX procedure:

\*\*\*\*\* PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 4.2 beta \*\*\*\*\*

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D.      www.afhayes.com  
Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

\*\*\*\*\*

Model : 1  
Y : DV2  
X : IV  
W : MOD

Sample  
Size: 170

\*\*\*\*\*

OUTCOME VARIABLE:  
DV2

Model Summary

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.2450	.0600	1.5860	3.5335	3.0000	166.0000	.0161

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.3542	.1818	18.4522	.0000	2.9953	3.7131
IV	.5625	.2777	2.0258	.0444	.0143	1.1107
MOD	.7328	.2598	2.8201	.0054	.2198	1.2458
Int_1	-1.1995	.3889	-3.0844	.0024	-1.9672	-.4317

Product terms key:

Int\_1 : IV x MOD

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):

	R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p
X*W	.0539	9.5134	1.0000	166.0000	.0024

Focal predict: IV (X)  
Mod var: MOD (W)

Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator(s):

MOD	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.0000	.5625	.2777	2.0258	.0444	.0143	1.1107
1.0000	-.6370	.2723	-2.3394	.0205	-1.1745	-.0994

\*\*\*\*\* ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS \*\*\*\*\*

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:  
95.0000

----- END MATRIX -----

## Regression Analysis: Model 1 for the third dependent variable *social media engagement*

Run MATRIX procedure:

\*\*\*\*\* PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 4.2 beta \*\*\*\*\*

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D.      www.afhayes.com  
Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

\*\*\*\*\*

Model : 1  
Y : DV3  
X : IV  
W : MOD

Sample  
Size: 168

\*\*\*\*\*

OUTCOME VARIABLE:  
DV3

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.3725	.1387	1.2750	8.8056	3.0000	164.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	2.9375	.1630	18.0238	.0000	2.6157	3.2593
IV	.8468	.2531	3.3457	.0010	.3471	1.3466
MOD	.8813	.2330	3.7829	.0002	.4213	1.3414
Int_1	-1.7907	.3516	-5.0923	.0000	-2.4850	-1.0963

Product terms key:

Int\_1 : IV x MOD

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):

	R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p
X*W	.1362	25.9311	1.0000	164.0000	.0000

Focal predict: IV (X)  
Mod var: MOD (W)

Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator(s):

MOD	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.0000	.8468	.2531	3.3457	.0010	.3471	1.3466
1.0000	-.9438	.2441	-3.8664	.0002	-1.4259	-.4618

\*\*\*\*\* ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS \*\*\*\*\*

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:  
95.0000

----- END MATRIX -----

## Regression Analysis: Model 1 for the fourth dependent variable *attitude*

Run MATRIX procedure:

\*\*\*\*\* PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 4.2 beta \*\*\*\*\*

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D.      www.afhayes.com  
Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

\*\*\*\*\*

Model : 1  
Y : DV4  
X : IV  
W : MOD

Sample  
Size: 170

\*\*\*\*\*

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

DV4

Model Summary

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.3225	.1040	1.6532	6.4231	3.0000	166.0000	.0004

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.7500	.1856	20.2064	.0000	3.3836	4.1164
IV	.5278	.2835	1.8617	.0644	-.0319	1.0875
MOD	.9022	.2653	3.4007	.0008	.3784	1.4260
Int_1	-1.6050	.3970	-4.0424	.0001	-2.3888	-.8211

Product terms key:

Int\_1 : IV x MOD

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):

	R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p
X*W	.0882	16.3409	1.0000	166.0000	.0001

Focal predict: IV (X)  
Mod var: MOD (W)

Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator(s):

MOD	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.0000	.5278	.2835	1.8617	.0644	-.0319	1.0875
1.0000	-1.0772	.2780	-3.8751	.0002	-1.6260	-.5284

\*\*\*\*\* ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS \*\*\*\*\*

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:

95.0000

----- END MATRIX -----

## Regression Analysis: Model 1 for the fifth dependent variable *word of mouth*

Run MATRIX procedure:

\*\*\*\*\* PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 4.2 beta \*\*\*\*\*

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D.      www.afhayes.com  
Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

\*\*\*\*\*

Model : 1  
Y : DV5  
X : IV  
W : MOD

Sample  
Size: 170

\*\*\*\*\*

OUTCOME VARIABLE:  
DV5

Model Summary

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.3725	.1387	1.5496	8.9130	3.0000	166.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.3125	.1797	18.4360	.0000	2.9578	3.6672
IV	.4560	.2745	1.6615	.0985	-.0859	.9979
MOD	.9339	.2568	3.6359	.0004	.4268	1.4410
Int_1	-1.7607	.3844	-4.5806	.0000	-2.5196	-1.0018

Product terms key:

Int\_1 : IV x MOD

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):

	R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p
X+W	.1089	20.9819	1.0000	166.0000	.0000

Focal predict: IV (X)  
Mod var: MOD (W)

Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator(s):

MOD	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.0000	.4560	.2745	1.6615	.0985	-.0859	.9979
1.0000	-1.3047	.2691	-4.8480	.0000	-1.8361	-.7734

\*\*\*\*\* ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS \*\*\*\*\*

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:  
95.0000

----- END MATRIX -----

## Regression Analysis: Model 7 for the first dependent variable *like*

Run MATRIX procedure:

\*\*\*\*\* PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 4.2 beta \*\*\*\*\*

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D.      www.afhayes.com  
Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

\*\*\*\*\*

Model : 7  
Y : DV1  
X : IV  
M : MED  
W : MOD

Sample  
Size: 170

\*\*\*\*\*

OUTCOME VARIABLE:  
MED

Model Summary

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.4245	.1802	2.3360	12.1661	3.0000	166.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.1354	.2206	14.2129	.0000	2.6999	3.5710
IV	1.5174	.3370	4.5028	.0000	.8520	2.1827
MOD	1.2450	.3154	3.9480	.0001	.6224	1.8676
Int_1	-2.8478	.4719	-6.0341	.0000	-3.7796	-1.9160

Product terms key:

Int\_1 : IV x MOD

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):

	R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p
X*W	.1798	36.4106	1.0000	166.0000	.0000

Focal predict: IV (X)  
Mod var: MOD (W)

Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator(s):

MOD	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.0000	1.5174	.3370	4.5028	.0000	.8520	2.1827
1.0000	-1.3304	.3304	-4.0264	.0001	-1.9828	-.6781

\*\*\*\*\*

OUTCOME VARIABLE:  
DV1

Model Summary

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.4974	.2475	1.1189	27.4565	2.0000	167.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
--	-------	----	---	---	------	------

constant	2.1444	.2123	10.0997	.0000	1.7252	2.5636
IV	.0796	.1632	.4875	.6265	-.2426	.4018
MED	.3592	.0486	7.3835	.0000	.2631	.4552

\*\*\*\*\* DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y \*\*\*\*\*

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.0796	.1632	.4875	.6265	-.2426	.4018

Conditional indirect effects of X on Y:

INDIRECT EFFECT:

IV	->	MED	->	DVI	
	MOD	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
	.0000	.5450	.1605	.2612	.8968
	1.0000	-.4778	.1257	-.7353	-.2416

Index of moderated mediation (difference between conditional indirect effects):

	Index	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
MOD	-1.0228	.2297	-1.5088	-.6012

\*\*\*\*\* ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS \*\*\*\*\*

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:  
95.0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:  
5000

----- END MATRIX -----

## Regression Analysis: Model 7 for the second dependent variable *engagement*

Run MATRIX procedure:

\*\*\*\*\* PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 4.2 beta \*\*\*\*\*

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D.      www.afhayes.com  
Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

\*\*\*\*\*

Model : 7  
Y : DV2  
X : IV  
M : MED  
W : MOD

Sample  
Size: 170

\*\*\*\*\*

OUTCOME VARIABLE:  
MED

Model Summary

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.4245	.1802	2.3360	12.1661	3.0000	166.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.1354	.2206	14.2129	.0000	2.6999	3.5710
IV	1.5174	.3370	4.5028	.0000	.8520	2.1827
MOD	1.2450	.3154	3.9480	.0001	.6224	1.8676
Int_1	-2.8478	.4719	-6.0341	.0000	-3.7796	-1.9160

Product terms key:

Int\_1 : IV x MOD

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):

	R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p
X*W	.1798	36.4106	1.0000	166.0000	.0000

Focal predict: IV (X)  
Mod var: MOD (W)

Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator(s):

MOD	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.0000	1.5174	.3370	4.5028	.0000	.8520	2.1827
1.0000	-1.3304	.3304	-4.0264	.0001	-1.9828	-6.781

\*\*\*\*\*

OUTCOME VARIABLE:  
DV2

Model Summary

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.4491	.2017	1.3389	21.0967	2.0000	167.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
--	-------	----	---	---	------	------



constant	2.4193	.2323	10.4157	.0000	1.9607	2.8778
IV	-.0640	.1785	-.3585	.7204	-.4165	.2885
MED	.3454	.0532	6.4914	.0000	.2404	.4505

\*\*\*\*\* DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y \*\*\*\*\*

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
-.0640	.1785	-.3585	.7204	-.4165	.2885

Conditional indirect effects of X on Y:

INDIRECT EFFECT:

IV	->	MED	->	DV2	
	MOD	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
	.0000	.5241	.1507	.2467	.8383
	1.0000	-.4596	.1395	-.7469	-.2036

Index of moderated mediation (difference between conditional indirect effects):

	Index	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
MOD	-.9837	.2375	-1.4684	-.5413

\*\*\*\*\* ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS \*\*\*\*\*

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:

95.0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:

5000

----- END MATRIX -----

## Regression Analysis: Model 7 for the third dependent variable *social media engagement*

Run MATRIX procedure:

\*\*\*\*\* PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 4.2 beta \*\*\*\*\*

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D.      www.afhayes.com  
Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

\*\*\*\*\*

Model : 7  
Y : DV3  
X : IV  
M : MED  
W : MOD

Sample  
Size: 168

\*\*\*\*\*

OUTCOME VARIABLE:  
MED

Model Summary							
	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.4225	.1785	2.3141	11.8792	3.0000	164.0000	.0000

Model							
	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	
constant	3.1354	.2196	14.2798	.0000	2.7019	3.5690	
IV	1.4969	.3410	4.3900	.0000	.8236	2.1702	
MOD	1.2450	.3139	3.9666	.0001	.6253	1.8648	
Int_1	-2.8274	.4737	-5.9681	.0000	-3.7628	-1.8919	

Product terms key:  
Int\_1 : IV x MOD

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):					
	R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p
X*W	.1784	35.6187	1.0000	164.0000	.0000

Focal predict: IV (X)  
Mod var: MOD (W)

Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator(s):

MOD	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.0000	1.4969	.3410	4.3900	.0000	.8236	2.1702
1.0000	-1.3304	.3289	-4.0454	.0001	-1.9798	-.6811

\*\*\*\*\*

OUTCOME VARIABLE:  
DV3

Model Summary							
	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.6349	.4031	.8783	55.7041	2.0000	165.0000	.0000

Model							
	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	

constant	1.6474	.1898	8.6819	.0000	1.2728	2.0221
IV	-.0909	.1457	-.6239	.5336	-.3785	.1967
MED	.4597	.0436	10.5421	.0000	.3736	.5458

\*\*\*\*\* DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y \*\*\*\*\*

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
-.0909	.1457	-.6239	.5336	-.3785	.1967

Conditional indirect effects of X on Y:

INDIRECT EFFECT:

IV	->	MED	->	DV3	
	MOD	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
	.0000	.6881	.2001	.3133	1.0987
	1.0000	-.6116	.1559	-.9170	-.3100

Index of moderated mediation (difference between conditional indirect effects):

	Index	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
MOD	-1.2997	.2757	-1.8430	-.7722

\*\*\*\*\* ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS \*\*\*\*\*

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:

95.0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:

5000

----- END MATRIX -----

## Regression Analysis: Model 7 for the fourth dependent variable *attitude*

Run MATRIX procedure:

\*\*\*\*\* PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 4.2 beta \*\*\*\*\*

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D.      www.afhayes.com  
Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

\*\*\*\*\*

Model : 7  
Y : DV4  
X : IV  
M : MED  
W : MOD

Sample  
Size: 170

\*\*\*\*\*

OUTCOME VARIABLE:  
MED

Model Summary							
	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.4245	.1802	2.3360	12.1661	3.0000	166.0000	.0000

Model						
	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.1354	.2206	14.2129	.0000	2.6999	3.5710
IV	1.5174	.3370	4.5028	.0000	.8520	2.1827
MOD	1.2450	.3154	3.9480	.0001	.6224	1.8676
Int_1	-2.8478	.4719	-6.0341	.0000	-3.7796	-1.9160

Product terms key:  
Int\_1 : IV x MOD

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):					
	R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p
X*W	.1798	36.4106	1.0000	166.0000	.0000

Focal predict: IV (X)  
Mod var: MOD (W)

Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator(s):

MOD	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.0000	1.5174	.3370	4.5028	.0000	.8520	2.1827
1.0000	-1.3304	.3304	-4.0264	.0001	-1.9828	-.6781

\*\*\*\*\*

OUTCOME VARIABLE:  
DV4

Model Summary							
	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.6685	.4469	1.0144	67.4771	2.0000	167.0000	.0000

Model						
	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI

constant	2.2017	.2022	10.8904	.0000	1.8026	2.6008
IV	-.3179	.1554	-2.0457	.0424	-.6247	-.0111
MED	.5314	.0463	11.4727	.0000	.4399	.6228

\*\*\*\*\* DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y \*\*\*\*\*

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
-.3179	.1554	-2.0457	.0424	-.6247	-.0111

Conditional indirect effects of X on Y:

INDIRECT EFFECT:

IV	->	MED	->	DV4	
	MOD	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
	.0000	.0063	.2129	.4004	1.2446
	1.0000	-.7069	.1749	-1.0500	-.3660

Index of moderated mediation (difference between conditional indirect effects):

	Index	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
MOD	-1.5132	.2913	-2.1012	-.9750

\*\*\*\*\* ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS \*\*\*\*\*

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:

95.0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:

5000

----- END MATRIX -----

## Regression Analysis: Model 7 for the fifth dependent variable *word of mouth*

Run MATRIX procedure:

\*\*\*\*\* PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 4.2 beta \*\*\*\*\*

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D.      www.afhayes.com  
Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

\*\*\*\*\*

Model : 7  
Y : DV5  
X : IV  
M : MED  
W : MOD

Sample  
Size: 170

\*\*\*\*\*

OUTCOME VARIABLE:  
MED

Model Summary

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.4245	.1802	2.3360	12.1661	3.0000	166.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.1354	.2206	14.2129	.0000	2.6999	3.5710
IV	1.5174	.3370	4.5028	.0000	.8520	2.1827
MOD	1.2450	.3154	3.9480	.0001	.6224	1.8676
Int_1	-2.8478	.4719	-6.0341	.0000	-3.7796	-1.9160

Product terms key:

Int\_1 : IV x MOD

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):

	R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p
X*W	.1798	36.4106	1.0000	166.0000	.0000

Focal predict: IV (X)  
Mod var: MOD (W)

Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator(s):

MOD	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.0000	1.5174	.3370	4.5028	.0000	.8520	2.1827
1.0000	-1.3304	.3304	-4.0264	.0001	-1.9828	-.6781

\*\*\*\*\*

OUTCOME VARIABLE:  
DV5

Model Summary

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.7130	.5084	.8792	86.3490	2.0000	167.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
--	-------	----	---	---	------	------

constant	1.7841	.1882	9.8548	.0000	1.3325	2.0757
IV	-.4718	.1447	-3.2609	.0013	-.7574	-.1861
MED	.5515	.0431	12.7988	.0000	.4664	.6367

\*\*\*\*\* DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y \*\*\*\*\*

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
-.4718	.1447	-3.2609	.0013	-.7574	-.1861

Conditional indirect effects of X on Y:

INDIRECT EFFECT:

IV	->	MED	->	DV5	
	MOD	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
	.0000	.8369	.2123	.4381	1.2688
	1.0000	-.7338	.1771	-1.0889	-.3959

Index of moderated mediation (difference between conditional indirect effects):

	Index	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
MOD	-1.5707	.2847	-2.1542	-1.0376

\*\*\*\*\* ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS \*\*\*\*\*

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:

95.0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:

5000

----- END MATRIX -----





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