

# GOING VIRAL: THE PATH TO VIDEO SUCCESS



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## BACKGROUND

Viral videos are videos that have gained widespread popularity by travelling from person to person via email, instant messages, and media-sharing websites (Wallsten, 2010).

Because of the strong influence viral videos have in popular culture our research team focused on determining the factors needed to make a video go viral.

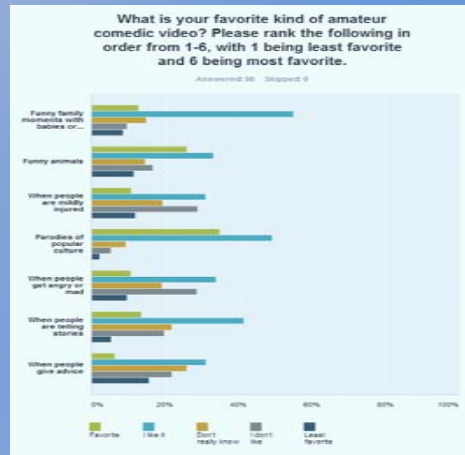
We focused on comedic amateur videos that have gone from being posted to video sharing sites such as YouTube or Vimeo to being parodied and showcased on popular television programs like Vh1's Tosh.O and MTV's Ridiculousness.

## METHODOLOGY

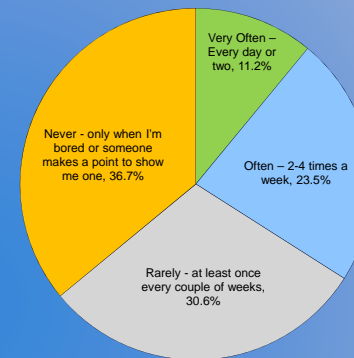
We chose to utilize a survey to gain a better understanding of the popular videos being shared and watched. We also used the survey to determine the similarities between videos that act as factors for viral video success.

We surveyed 98 students. The survey also asked for distinguishing characteristics such as race and gender to determine if there were any correlations between the groups surveyed. Following the survey we interviewed viral video sensation, Paige Reynolds from "Scarlet Takes a Tumble" to gain further perspective.

## RESULTS



How Often Do You Watch Viral Videos?



- 18 out of 98 respondents post videos to media platforms like YouTube while 71 do not. 9 of the 98 admit that they have not but would like to.
- 48.42% of people share videos via social networks, 22.92% by showing others in person, 16.67% by word of mouth, and 3.26% by email.

Where do you find viral videos?

	To a large extent	To a moderate extent	To some extent	To little extent	Not at all	Total Respondents
Youtube:	35.42% 34	19.79% 19	16.67% 16	21.88% 21	7.29% 7	96
Recommendations from friends through social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter:	39.80% 39	25.51% 25	22.45% 22	7.14% 7	5.10% 5	98
The news (TV broadcasts, online articles, newspapers)	3.09% 3	8.25% 8	20.62% 20	38.14% 37	31.96% 31	97
Promotions on TV shows like Tosh.O, Ridiculousness, and South Park	9.28% 9	9.28% 9	17.53% 17	22.68% 22	42.27% 41	97

## CONCLUSION

The results of our survey indicated that less than 20% of social media viewers actually post videos and of the videos posted by the 20% only a slim percentage are actually shared with other users.

There are certain factors that increase the likelihood of a video progressing to viral status. They are:

- The surprise/shock factor
- Spontaneity
- The popularity of the initial sharer,
- Reliable target audience.
- Timing of release or relevancy of topic
- Easy to replicate or parody of popular video

Though these factors do not ultimately determine if a video goes viral, at least one is present in the videos with the highest views.

## REFERENCE

K. Wallsten (2010). "Yes We Can": How online viewership, blog discussion, campaign statements, and mainstream media coverage produced a viral video phenomenon. *Journal of Information Technology and Politics*. 7 (2-3).