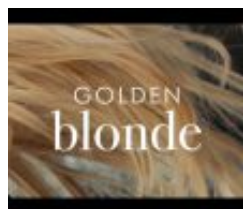


Timeline gold: How 5 brands are using social data creatively

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Date : July 25, 2016



In the age of ad blocking, **brands** are racing to create content that will get users opting in rather than out.

Personalization is a crucial part of this. And **brands** are mining users' **social** feeds — be it **Twitter**, Facebook or Instagram — to create more meaningful, and tailored, campaigns.

“They’re prepared to flex their **brand** to fit with you and your interests; that’s how they get around the ad-blocking conundrum,” Jed Hallam, head of **digital** strategy at Mindshare, told Digiday.

By taking user-generated content and spinning it into a **branded** experience, the aim is to connect on a “macro level,” he added.

Here are five **brands** aiming to do just that.

John Frieda’s “Shades of Me”

Earlier this month, haircare **brand** John Frieda launched a campaign, “Shades of Me,” which serves users a personalized video based on their Instagram uploads. The tool scans their photos using a custom-made algorithm to find their most-used color. Then, it assigns the user several words related to that shade (blue is “mysterious,” for example).

This is combined with their hair color to create a 15-second video for them.

<https://twitter.com/JohnFriedaUK/status/744894520366596096>

Created by the agency Brave, the campaign is running for six weeks. According to John Frieda’s **digital marketing** manager Alex Bradbury, it’s part of a wider push within the **brand** to make all communications personalized.

“Everybody wants something that nobody has; that’s the crux of it,” shen said. “They want something that’s tailored to them, something that gets a layer deeper.”

Hallam thinks the campaign is an effective one. However, having to leave the platform and go to a microsite can weaken the customer experience even as it allows the **brand** more functionality.

Dove's "Speak Beautiful"

Dove delved into users' **Twitter** timelines for its latest #SpeakBeautiful campaign — another in its long line of body-positive activations.

According to Dove's research, 72 percent of girls receive negative comments weekly, but 80 percent of women's body-shaming tweets are about themselves.

Those who retweeted the **brand's** message (below) were given a custom report about their own emotional state on the platform. In this report, they could see the percentage of positive vs. negative tweets overall and on the subject of beauty.

<https://twitter.com/Dove/status/708744741085642753>

Callum McCahon, a senior strategist at agency Born **Social**, said the campaign was effective as it is tech-driven without being gimmicky. It's also consistent with the **brand's** body-positive image.

"The promise of **social** media was always that you don't have to do a one-size-fits-all campaign like TV," he said. "Incentivizing user-generated content gives people something they want to share, which is the richest tool for engagement."

This is similar to Snapchat's geofilter function, which gives users something functional to create their own content without being overtly **branded**.

Virgin Atlantic's "One Day"

Virgin Atlantic tapped into users' **Twitter** archives for its riff on making dream holidays happen (i.e., making "one day" today).

The airline used tweets from users' **Twitter** feeds to display on its out-of-home billboards. Those who saw their own tweet — where they had pondered flying somewhere exciting — in the 30-second spot could then claim a prize with the **brand**.

Once claimed, the **Twitter** user would be contacted with the destination chosen for them and details of their flight.

Roztayger's style advice

The luxury bag retailer is using the artificial intelligence of IBM's Watson to [analyze users' social feeds](#). From this information, Roztayger can match each user with five **designers** on the site according to their personality type. All the software needs is their gender, a **social** feed and an (optional) 200-word bio about them.

Leo Burnett's futures director Chris Walts says we'll see more tools like this pop up. For him, they represent a "second wave" of the 2010-era Facebook campaigns which plugged into users' images and profile data like the "[Take this Lollipop](#)" video.

"We'll see more personalized campaigns, whether that's 'passive' tweets or product recommendations based on selfies," he said. "What's really exciting is the passive nature of it, as you don't have to plug in too much info."

How to be Single's "My Squad"

Warner Brothers Pictures teamed up with **social** video-maker EchoMany earlier this year to create a trailer that can be personalized to its viewer.

Users who tweeted the film's handle with the details of their friendship group, or squad, received a video that drew their information into the title sequence, including their name and the **Twitter** handles of their friends.

<https://twitter.com/HTBSSquad/status/694877813292339200>

The campaign follows Fox's #BringHimHome campaign for the film "The Martian" last year, which created customized trailers ahead of the film's release.

This article first appeared in www.digiday.com