

CONTAGIOUS

Why Things Catch On

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MAIN IDEA

What makes an idea, a product or a behavior go viral and spread widely without any real marketing input or expenditure?

You might be tempted to think this is just a matter of random luck but it's usually not. Products or ideas become contagious whenever and wherever six key STEPPS principles come into play:

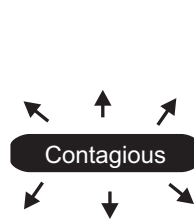


- S Social Currency
- T Triggers
- E Emotion
- P Public
- P Practical Value
- S Stories

If you're trying to make a product or an idea become contagious, find ways to build these six STEPPS principles into the design of the product or into the messaging which arises around your product or idea. If you can do that, you can make your product or idea go viral and get everyone talking about it.

"Follow these six key STEPPS, or even just a few of them, and you can harness social influence and word of mouth to get any product or idea to catch on. The best part of the STEPPS framework is that anyone can use it. It doesn't require a huge advertising budget, marketing genius, or some sort of creativity gene. If you follow these six key STEPPS, you can make any product or idea contagious."

– Jonah Berger



- S Social Currency ▶ You share those things which make you look good
- T Triggers ▶ Whatever is top of mind is also at the tip of your tongue
- E Emotion ▶ When you care about something, you share
- P Public ▶ If you build to show, you also build to grow
- P Practical Value ▶ You like having news you can use
- S Stories ▶ Information travels under the guise of idle chatter

S – Social Currency – You share those things which make you look good Page 2

You have social currency when you know about cool things which others are not yet aware of. To get people talking, you have to figure out what is truly remarkable about your product or idea and what you can do to make people feel like insiders.

T – Triggers – Whatever is top of mind is also at the tip of your tongue Page 3

Triggers prompt people to think about your product or idea and to talk about it. Find ways to design products and ideas which are frequently triggered by cues in the everyday environment. The more often people think about you, the more they will talk about you.

E – Emotion – When you care about something, you share Page 4

If you make people feel something, they will remember better. You can't help sharing something which is highly emotional – it's what humans do. Make sure you pick the right emotions to evoke and then build in clues which relate back to those emotions.

P – Public – If you build to show, you also build to grow Page 5

If people see someone using your product or idea, they're more likely to want it for themselves. Find ways to make your idea observable and you have something which not only advertises itself but also creates a behavioral residue effect.

P – Practical Value – You like having news you can use Page 6

People like to help others. Therefore, if you have an idea that is a genuine benefit, they will spread the word. Highlight the true value of your product or idea and then package your knowledge and expertise so others can pass it on.

S – Stories – Information travels under the guise of idle chatter Pages 7 - 8

People don't share information – they tell stories. If you can wrap your idea into the broader narrative of a story people want to share, they will spread the word. The trick is to make your message so integral people can't tell the story without it.

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