



# Toggling Categories, Tugging Emotions

Research has shown that positive talk about a brand typically results in “positive profits.” The challenge for marketers is to tap into the opportunity to build brand gratitude and emotionally connect with consumers by transporting their users into the blogosphere.

» Toggling between categories always uncovers interesting new perspectives. Pharmaceutical marketers often bemoan the myriad of barriers they face in using social media, including the uncertain regulatory environment as well as the generally risk-adverse internal cultures.

However a quick pivot over to the world of OTC products shows that the grass is not always greener. OTC has its own difficulties too, chief among them, the challenge of creating a relevant connection with consumers.

Not surprisingly, a blogosphere analysis of OTC and Rx pain relievers revealed a far greater emotional investment in the Rx products. Rx products are used to treat more serious conditions and therefore, having an emotional edge over an OTC pain reliever is somewhat intuitive. However, the extent of this gap surprised me.

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At my agency, Extrovertic, we look at something we call the emotional depth index – the amount of positive brand talk in the blogosphere over the neutral talk to gauge the relative emotion consumers have invested in a brand. Lyrica, which is used to treat fibromyalgia, had an emotional index of 216, meaning the amount of positive talk outstripped the neutral by more than 2 to 1. Tylenol and Advil, however, both indexed below 100, at 50 and 69, respectively. While people talk a lot about OTC pain relievers, it is not with a lot of feeling (See chart on next page; Source: *Consumersphere Analysis*).

Why does this matter? Because positive talk is associated with positive profits. Fred Reichheld, in his book, “*The Ultimate Question*,” has demonstrated across multiple categories ranging from computers to life insurance that positive word of mouth drives positive business results. Increasing the percentage of your customers who are willing to recommend your product to a friend also propels your growth and profitability.

## BUILDING EMOTIONAL DEPTH IN YOUR BRAND

So how do you create an emotional bond strong enough to generate



consumer recommendations and positive talk? Once again, toggling to another category, Health and Beauty Aids, provides some inspiration. Having once done a tour of duty as an Old Spice assistant product manager, the Old Spice Swagger campaign caught my attention.

The off-line Swagger campaign is a tongue-in-cheek series of ads that credit the Swagger line of men’s toiletries with the ability to turn wimps into swaggering men. How can you tell a real man from a wimp? Why by the size of his digital footprint! What kind of real man Googles himself

and comes up empty?

Should a man find himself in this unfortunate position, once again, it is Swagger to the rescue. All a man has to do is turn to Swaggerizeme.com, which will generate fake articles, blogs, etc., to build a “manly” digital footprint. Besides being hilariously funny, the campaign offers inspiration for how to use social media to create positive talk and emotion around your brand.

**BUILD ON YOUR FUNDAMENTAL TARGET INSIGHT**

Swaggerizeme.com is one of the best translations of an off-line campaign into the world of social media that I have seen. Rather than merely throwing the ads up on YouTube, the brand builds on the universal insight of men acting “manly” to attract the opposite sex. Swagger asks the question, “What does a ‘manly’ man look like in the social media space?” The answer is that a big digital footprint is now an essential accoutrement for today’s manly man (in addition to, of course, the Swagger line of products).

Taking a page from the Swagger book, how could the insights about your target consumer translate into the social media space? Would your target be a blogger if she only knew how? How does your brand’s essence translate? If your brand is all about empowerment, what can you do in the social media space to empower your users to do what they want to do?

**HELP YOUR TARGET CREATE THEIR OWN DIGITAL FOOTPRINT**

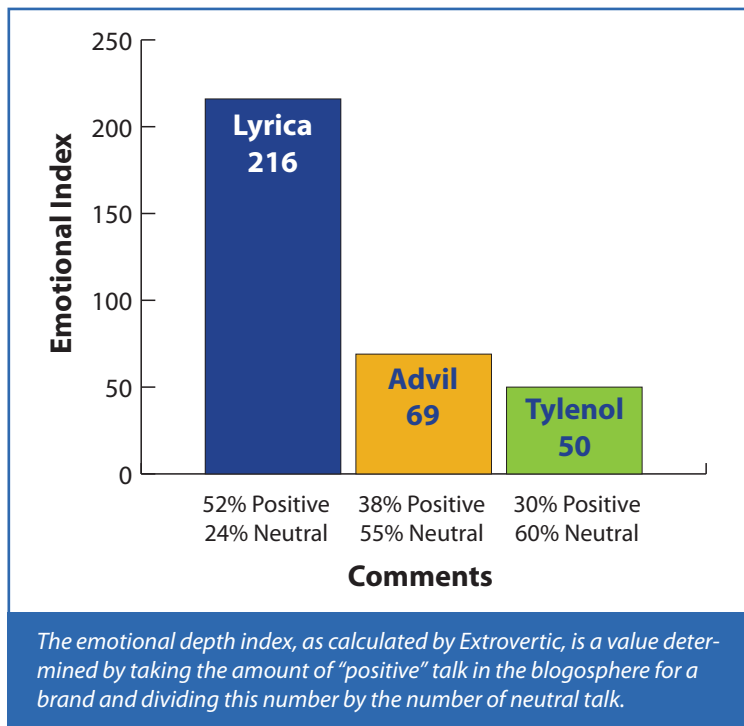
Taking the tongue out of the cheek, how can you help your consumer access the many benefits of

social media?

Brands whose targets skew 65+ have a particularly good opportunity to build some brand gratitude and emotional connection by transporting their users into the blogosphere.

Social media can provide seniors with a way to overcome social isolation that often leads to both physical and mental deterioration. As Mark Drossman, my co-founding partner of Extrovertic, wrote in a recent blog post, “according to a study from the Karolinska Institute in Sweden, social media, e-mail and sites like Google can help seniors to maintain their mental acuity.”

OTC brands that skew 65+, such as arthritis medications, laxatives and indigestion aids, could very legitimately extend their brand remit into helping their target enter the social media space. Dashing over to the consumer category for some quick insight, Dell’s small business Facebook page, Social Media for Small Business, provides a great straightforward example of how to help customers into the social media space. On this page, Dell offers a number of primers on how to use social media to the small business owner’s benefit.



**KEEP TOGGING TO OTHER CATEGORIES FOR INSPIRATION**

While few OTC brands can get away with the outright humor of the Old Spice campaign, the backbone of the campaign is clearly more broadly applicable. Think about the last brand, product or service you recommended to a friend and look to see what that brand is doing in the social media space. It just might provide the juice your brand needs to generate some positive, brand building emotion. <<

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