**Social Media / Mobile Visual Messaging**

Viral advertising is messaging that’s especially crafted to be passed along or spread by consumers. Studies have shown that emotion is an important component that encourages pass-on behavior. A positive emotional tone—happy, excited, satisfied—greatly influences forwarding intentions.

However, ads that trigger other strong emotional reactions like astonishment, shock, envy and genuine sympathy are also deeply engaging. Think of the ALS ice bucket challenge that inspired many, including Mark Zuckerberg, Oprah, and Justin Timberlake, to participate and share their own videos. Some research establishes that narrative transportation in viral ads—what happens when the audience steps into the story—gets stronger when senders and intended receivers have personal ties.

Memes can be an integral part of a social media marketing campaign. **Seamless**, an online food delivery service, “news-jacked” the 2014 Academic Award nominations with a campaign called “OscarNomNoms.” The memes featured spoofed film posters, for example bannering “Wolf of Waffle Street” (spoofing the film Wolf of Wall Street) above a powdered sugar-dusted waffle. It encouraged user involvement, turning suggestions from followers into new film poster spoofs.

Tourism used to be about experience seeking. Not so any more, according to Justin Francis, the CEO of Responsible Travel, a company that arranges sustainable travel for customers. He offers, “Now it’s about using photography and social media to build a personal brand.” Business columnist for the *New York Times*, Manjoo reports that throngs of tourists in popular European destinations each summer turn them into selfie-stick-clogged, ‘Disneyfied’ towns.

While this trend, called #MeTourism, can make personal experiences less authentic, it can also benefit the destination or product. Tourism brands will contract with “influencer marketers” – celebrities or online opinion leaders -- who then post favorable content.

Ordinary citizens may be influenced to post social media selfies in destinations (called “organic advertising”) after being inspired by a brand’s existing ad campaign. A Turkish Airlines advertising campaign with star athletes Lionel Messi and Kobe Bryant (below) featured their selfies in a range of extreme locations See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jhFqSlvbKAM>

 

**Caption:** Turkish Airlines boosted its brand with a campaign featuring Lionel Messi and Kobe Bryant taking selfies in exotic destinations