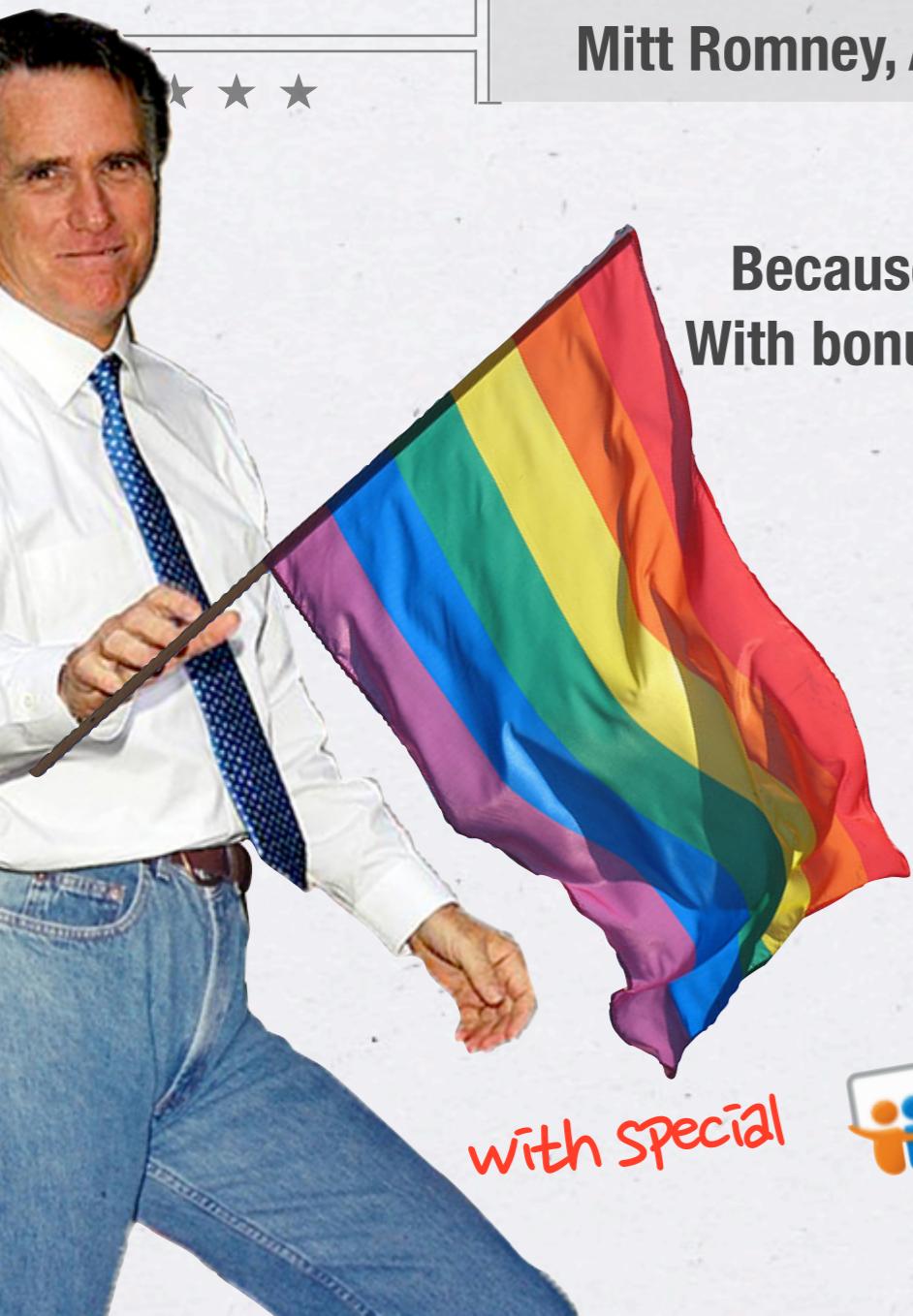


*you should go ahead  
and favorite this now.*

# UPWORTHY'S

## HOW TO MAKE THAT ONE THING GO VIRAL *\*Just kidding!*

Mitt Romney, Angry Irishmen, Sexist Pens, The GAYZ and You.



Good luck with that.

Because luck is the only way it's gonna happen.

With bonus "make your boss be reasonable" slides!

RootsCamp 2012

#UpRoots @Upworthy #roots12

with special

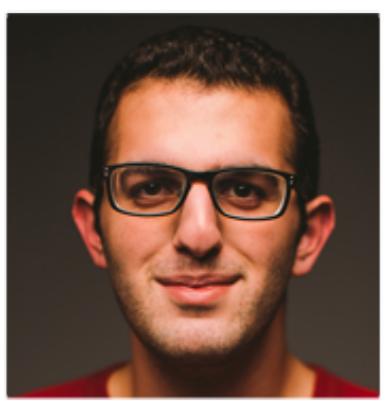


slideshare optimized buttons!  
with links to hits!

click to see @  
**UPWORTHY**



# What Makes Us Fancy Experts?



Mansur  
Gidfar

Viral Curator



- BS in Advertising (Soon.)

- Cried a little after finding out the real world is nothing like “The West Wing.”

- Wrote our first two 1,000,000-view hits.



Rollie  
Williams

Viral Curator



- Encyclopedic knowledge of Scooby Doo.

- Knows who REALLY let the dogs out; won't say who.

- Wrote our first big hit, as an intern, on a video that everyone had already seen.



Adam  
Mordecai

Viral Curator



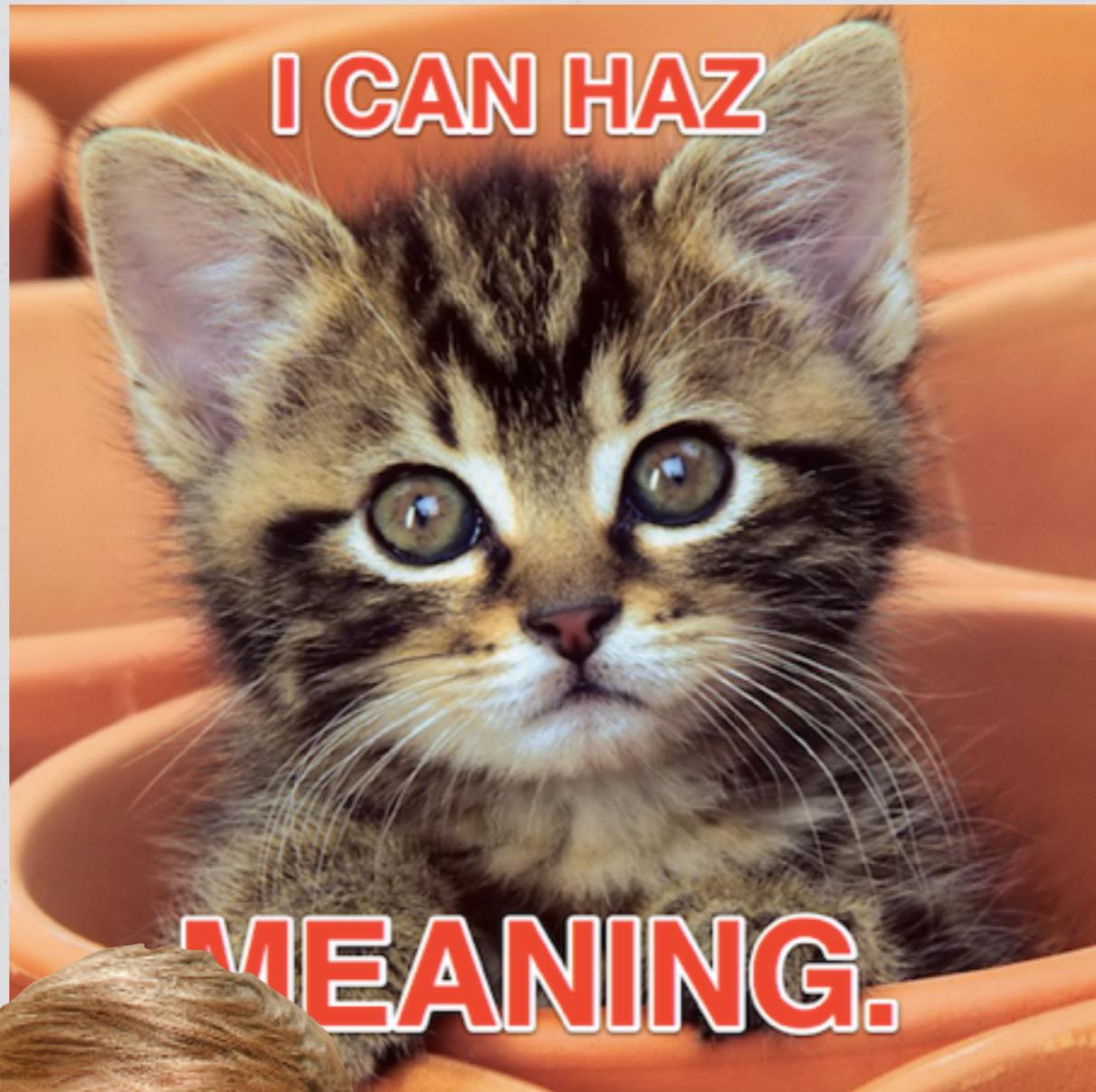
- Worked on the Howard Dean campaign, maybe caused the scream? So he's seen things go viral.

- Screws around on the Internet for monetary compensation.

- Can imitate muppets.

# Who The Hell Are We? Meet The Founders.

Eli  
Pariser



Chris Hughes



Peter  
Koechley



UPWORTHY

# Blend It All Together

Launches March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2012

UPWORTHY



=



As of December 3, 2012:  
**791,000 Facebook fans, 10,000 Tumblrs,  
and 43,000 Twitter followers.**

# What We Do In A Nutshell

1. Find a meaningful piece of content we think people should see.
2. Improve the framing and put it on our site so more people will see it.
3. Promote the cause or idea so that the world remembers that there are more important things to ponder than Honey Boo Boo.
4. ???
5. PROFIT?!?! Invest in Nutshells?



# What Made Us Think This Whole Thing Could Work?

meet the folks at **MoveOn.org**  
DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

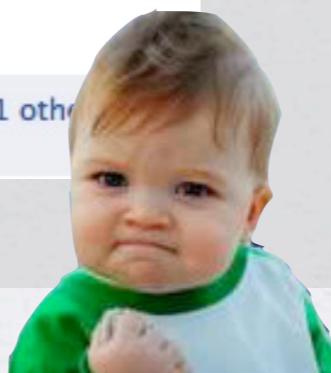
**Zach Wahls**

Fun fact: If you Google "Two Lesbians" with SafeSearch OFF, my moms and I are the top hit.

Unlike · Comment · Share · Yesterday at 10:42am ·

You, Sara Critchfield, Jennifer Miller, Markus Fors and 341 others like this.

- \* **Zach Wahls Speaks About Family (YouTube Title)**  
(1 million views)
  
- \* **Two Lesbians Raised A Baby And This Is What They Got (MoveOn Title)**  
**(17 MILLION VIEWS!!1!)**



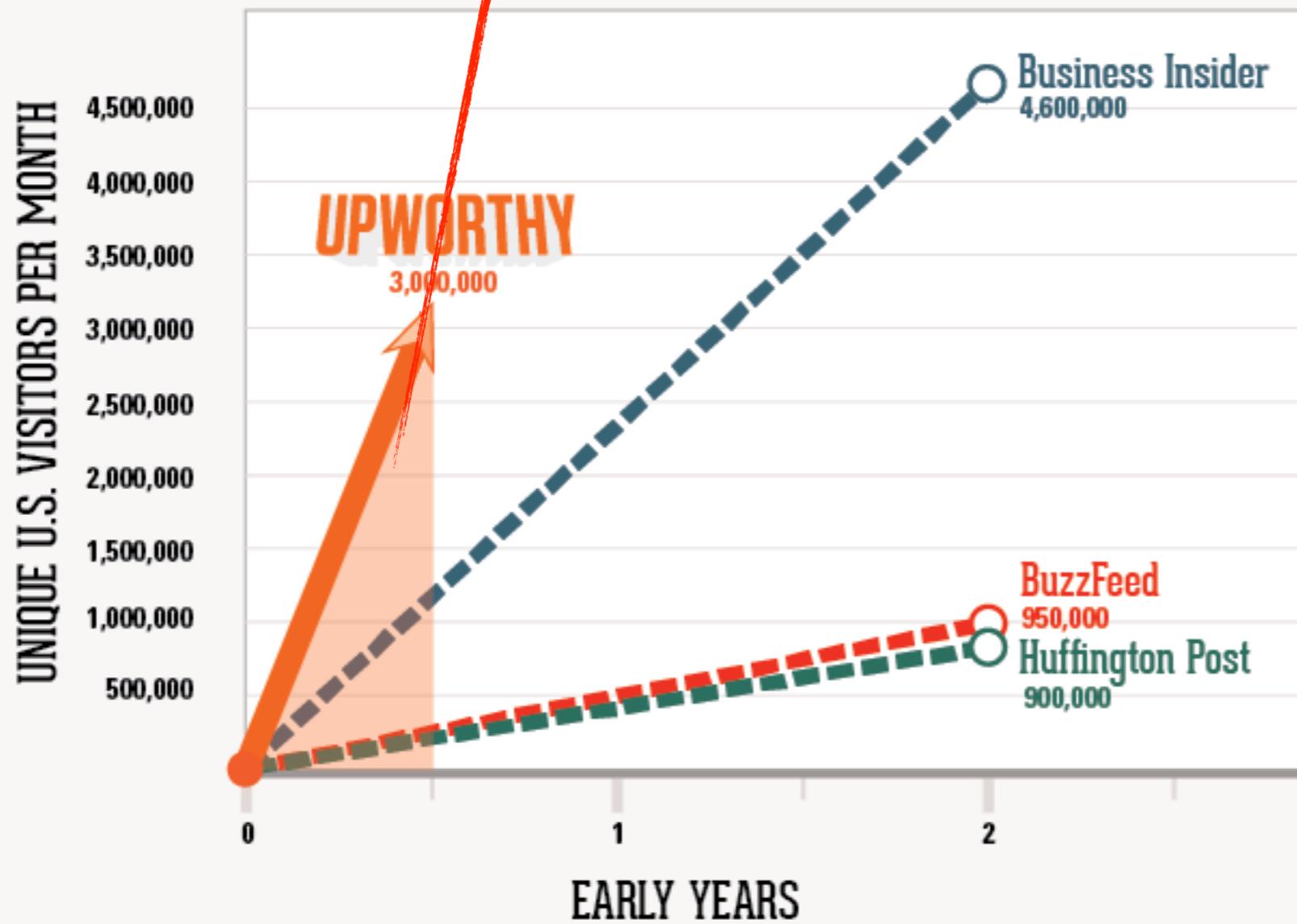
**UPWORTHY**

We Are Now HERE - X

# We're Off To A Good Start

## OUT OF DATE COMPARITIVE GROWTH

Monthly unique U.S. impressions, as estimated by Quantcast.



UPWORTHY

# THE MOST FAQ EVER

How Do You Make That One Thing You Made  
Go Super Viral And Stuff?



# First, Let's Define "Viral."

Shares per View	Clicks per Share	Viral?
LOW	LOW	nope
HIGH	LOW	kinda?
LOW	HIGH	not so much
HIGH	HIGH	Hell Yeah!

If people click and don't share, you lose.

If people share, but their friends don't click, you lose.

Ergo, your content must be really shareable and clickable.

# Why The Hell Do People Share?



So if you can find that happy medium between entertainment and an emotional connection, you can make some magic happen.

# Where The Hell Do People Share?

Almost all your traffic will come from

# facebook

You have to go where they live.



reddit

good luck, if  
you crack it you  
are a god.

# tumblr

slow cook it to  
perfection.

# twitter

If you do it right,  
it can make a dent.

# Six Degrees Of Viral Bacon Shares

**EASY:** Getting your audience to like.

**NOT AS EASY:** Getting your audience to click and share.

**HARDER:** Getting your audience's audience to click.

**EVEN HARDER:** Getting your audience's audience to share.

**HARDEST:** Getting your audience's audience's audience's audience to share something with Kevin Bacon, which he then likes and shares.

**That's when you know something's really viral.**



# Your Audience Already Likes You

Your audience will share your stuff.

**It's their friends** that you really have to focus on.

If their friends who haven't heard of you share,  
you have a way better shot at viral gold.

So your content better appeal to them.



# STEP 1: FINDING EPIC CONTENT



- A Hero
- A Villain
- A Emotional Story Arc
- A Super Inspiring Meaningful Message
- Post At The Right Time And The Right Place (Good luck with that.)
- Charles Xavier & Cerebro (So you can read people's minds and know what they will share in the future.)

# How Hard Can It Be To Find Awesome Stuff?

**56% of our posts don't break 10K views.**

**5% of our posts have reached 100K views.**

**2.7% have reached 200K views.**

**1.9% have reached 300K views.**

**1.1% have reached 400K views.**

**0.7% have broken 500K views.**

and only **5 POSTS** have broken 1,000,000 views. (0.3% for those playing the home game.)

Tell me  
more about how  
easy this is.



# Our Top 0.3% Think They Are SOOO Special



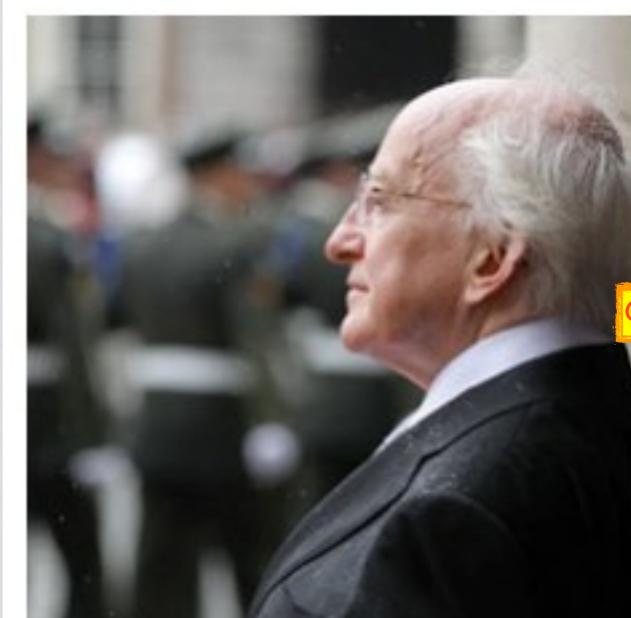
Sep 5 2012

**Mitt Romney Accidentally Confronts A Gay Veteran; Awesomeness Ensues**



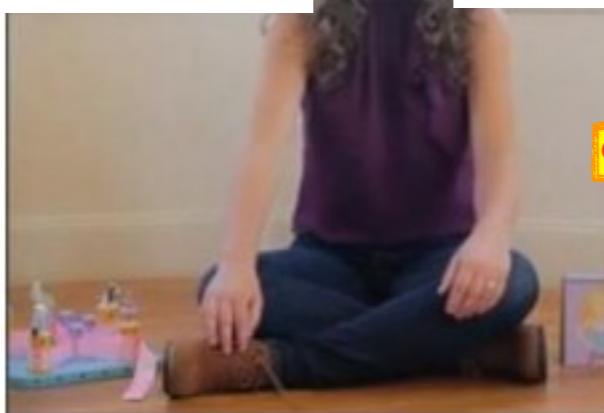
Oct 2 2012

**Bully Calls News Anchor Fat, News Anchor Destroys Him On Live TV**



Aug 22 2012

**A Tea Partier Decided To Pick A Fight With A Foreign President. It Didn't Go So Well.**



Nov 13 2012

**Move Over, Barbie – You're Obsolete**



Oct 23 2012

**BOOM, ROASTED: Here's Why You Don't Ask A Feminist To Hawk Your Sexist Product**

# The Top 0.3%: Irish Dude Yells At A Guy In A Bar

Original Title: Michael D Higgins v Michael Graham (Newstalk 106-108fm, 2010)

Original Stats: Posted March 3, 2012 — 223,000 Views



## Why We Think It Did Well:

1. It's a really meaty rant that captured how fed up people are with extremism in this needlessly ideological day and age.
2. The Irish guy went on to be president, which we framed well. Also, he called him a "Wanker," which is hilarious.

## How We Got Lucky:

Completely unintentionally, we posted this on August 22, which was 3 days after Tea Party Congressman Todd Akin made his idiotic comments about "Legitimate Rape." As such, a Tea Partier getting schooled was especially resonant. On an AUDIO CLIP, no less.

Shares: 98,000 Tweets: 37,000

## What We Did To It:



Aug 22 2012

**A Tea Partier Decided To Pick A Fight With A Foreign President. It Didn't Go So Well.**

click to see @  
**UPWORTHY**

# STEP 2: Frame ‘Em



**It doesn't matter how good your content is.  
If you don't make it compelling enough to click and  
share, no one will know it exists.**

# FRAME ALL THE THINGS!

- The Share Text
- The Headline
- The Excerpt
- The Share Image
- The Tweet
- Your Mom\*



\*We're Not Joking About The Mom Thing



# Let's Talk About Your Mom, Dude



- \* **FACT:** No one likes to disappoint their mom.
- \* **DOUBLE FACT:** Middle-aged women are the biggest sharers on the Interwebs.
- \* **ERGO:** If you frame your content to not make your mom shake her head in disappointment, you have a better chance of winning.

# Social Headlines Need A “Curiosity Gap”

Too vague, and I don't want to click:

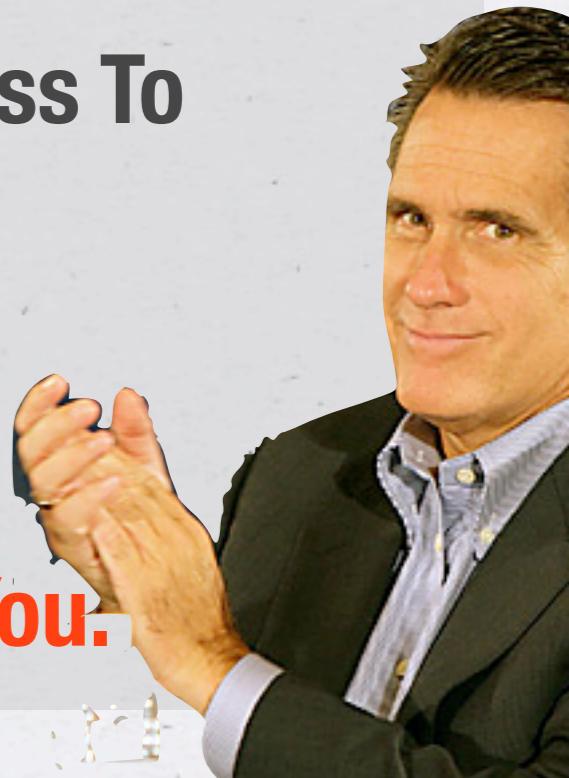
**Mitt Romney Says Something Bad, Again**

Too specific, and I don't need to click.

**Mitt Romney Says, “I Want The Middle Class To  
Be Tied To The Roof Of My Car.”**

Ergo...

**You Will Not Believe What Mitt Wants To Do To You.**



# You Aren't A Bad Person



I know what you are thinking.  
Marketing is not inherently evil, hippie.

If making a snarky and entertaining headline is the difference between 100 people seeing something important and 1,000,000 people seeing something important, which would you choose?

# Upworthy's Editorial Process



- 1. You HAVE to crap out 25 headlines for every piece of content.**
- 2. You WILL write some really stinky headlines.**
- 3. Once you start getting desperate, you start thinking outside the box.**
- 4. So you HAVE TO WRITE 25 HEADLINES.**
- 5. #24 will suck. Then #25 will be a gift from the headline gods and will make you a legend.**
- 6. Accept that not every headline will be perfect.**
- 7. Then write 25 headlines.**
- 8. With practice, you'll be writing 25 in 15 minutes. Then I will give you permission to lower your limit.**

## SO PLEASE WRITE 25 HEADLINES

# Headline Rules

**Don't give it all away in the headline.**

**Also, don't give it all away in the excerpt, share image, or share text.**

**Don't be shrill. Don't form an opinion for the end user. Let them do that.**

**Don't bum people out. (Remember slide 11.)**

**Don't sexualize your headlines in a way your mom wouldn't approve.**

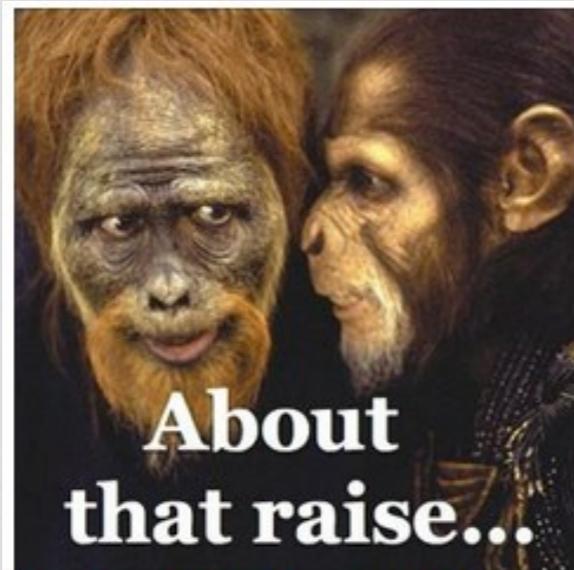
**And don't over-think it. Some of your headlines will suck. Accept it and keep writing.**

**Which reminds me, my mom doesn't like it when you put the word "sucks" in headlines.**

**Lastly, be clever. But not TOO clever.**

# The Case Of The Clever Monkeys

We had two of our curators write up the SAME video about two monkeys in an experiment.



Remember 'Planet Of The  
Apes'? It's Closer To Reality  
Than You Think.

8,000

Pageviews



2 Monkeys Were Paid  
Unequally; See What  
Happens Next

474,000

Pageviews



Sometimes, if you get TOO clever, your audience won't get it. So it pays to test things.  
And write 25 headlines. And show this to your boss when he tells you it's a waste of time.

YOU WILL WRITE

25

HEADLINES!1!!!1

Otherwise, people won't click your links.

So I'd write 25 headlines.

# The Top 0.3%: Ellen Ruins Lady Pens For Everyone



**Original Title:** Bic Pens for Women



**What We Did To It:**



## Why We Think It Did Well:

It's really funny. And women are the biggest sharers. The hero and the villain are very clear. Also, it's really smart. And did we mention funny?

Our curator, Rebecca, nailed the framing. Also most people love celebrities and abhor sexism. Especially all the people who like/know women.

## How We Got Lucky:

We posted this right in the run up to the election. The Republican Party had been dealing with various candidates talking about "legitimate rape," their presidential nominee had been speaking of "binders full of women," and clearly the electorate was tired of hearing about all of it.

**Shares:** 65,291    **Likes:** 128,785    **Comments:** 55,156    **Tweets:** 23,518



Oct 23 2012

**BOOM, ROASTED: Here's Why You Don't Ask A Feminist To Hawk Your Sexist Product**

click to see @  
**UPWORTHY**

# Also...

**Not sure if we mentioned this yet, but you should write 25 headlines unless you want the terrorists to win.**



# The Share Image Is Your ‘In’



If You Have Any Brains At All, This Guy Deserves Your Vote

x VS. y  
people love  
dichotomies



May 30 2012  
Who Wants To Cry And Have Their Faith In Humanity Restored?

Heavily annotated



Next Time Nemo Goes Missing, Just Assume He's Getting Drunk At A Factory

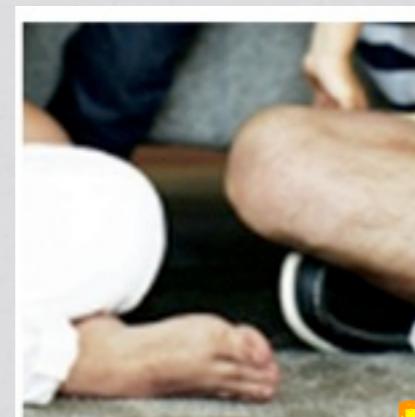
video symbol



I Made You A Surprise For Thanksgiving. It's A Chemical. You Have To Guess Which Dish It's In.

@UP

obvious screenshot



Jun 5 2012  
What Heroic Thing Did JC Penney Do After Being Targeted by An Anti-Gay Group?

curiosity-inducin'.  
WTF Knee?!



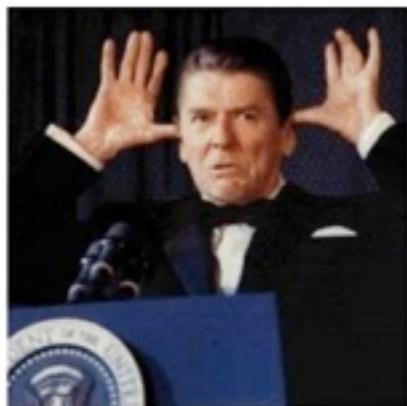
NSFW: Photos of Topless Women That Even The Most Hardcore Feminist Will Love

@UP

PG-13

# Do Not Take The Share Image For Granted

Nobody cares about seeing your logo on a Facebook post. They want drama.



May 16 2012  
There Couldn't Possibly Be Footage Of Ronald Reagan Saying THIS, Right?



Interesting celebrity image



Next Time You See A Cute Little Baby, Here's How It's F\*#king With Your Brain



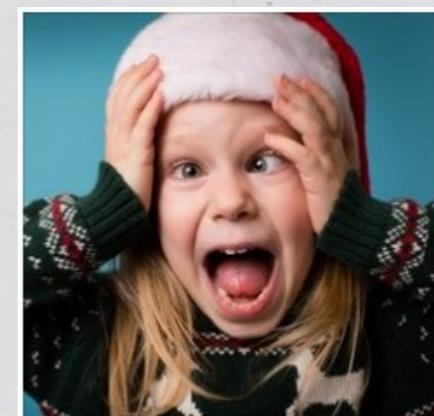
The cutest thing in the world



Jun 4 2012  
A Chart About Silence That Will Leave You Speechless



Weird face, close up



IS THIS THE BEST BLACK FRIDAY DEAL IN THE HISTORY OF THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE!??



Both cute and weird face

If your boss wants their logo on Facebook shares, tell them to find a new digital director who can make people care more about logos than kittens.



# I Know Your Boss Thinks It's A Waste Of Time but, I have an idea.

You should write 25 headlines  
and test the best ones.

Then people will want to “click”  
on your “stuff” and bring “traffic” back to your  
“website.” Then your boss will “finally get it.”

# Pop Quiz For Your Boss

A white dude tells all the other white dudes that they start on third base and have tons of advantages from birth. Also, he mentions that it might be good to get over it.



- (A) A Public Service Announcement On Behalf Of All White Dudes**
- (B) Put Yourself In A White Guy's Shoes. Comfy, Right?**

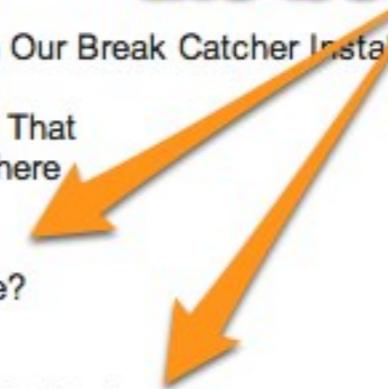
Which headline wins?

# See, I wrote 25...

Headline Options (write 25 alternative headlines and bold your faves)

1. Hey White Guys! I Got Your Back.
2. **Do You Know How Hard It Is Being A White Guy?**
3. Being A White Guy Is Harder Than You Think
4. **You Don't Know What It's Like Being a White Guy**
5. White Guys Don't Have All The Luck
6. **If You Knew What It Was Like For White Guys, You'd Keep Complaining**
7. Seriously, Who Is Watching Out For The White Guys
8. This White Guy Thing Is Pretty Rough
9. You Don't Know What It's Like Being A White Guy
10. Imagine You Were A White Guy. You Know How Hard That Is?
11. Why Are White Guys Always Being Picked On?
12. Seriously, White Guys Can't Catch A Break > What With Our Break Catcher Installed And Handled For Us
13. White Guys Have So Many Problems, If Only You'd See That
14. An Open Message On Behalf Of All White Guys Everywhere
15. This Is What A White Guy Has To Deal With
16. **Put Yourself In A White Guy's Shoes. Comfy, Right?**
17. The Life Of White Guys Is Way Harder Than You Realize?
18. This Is Why You Should Feel Sorry For White Dudes
19. **An Open Letter From White Dudes To America**
20. **A Public Service Announcement On Behalf Of All White Dudes**
21. White Dudes Have It Really Hard > You Don't Understand Our Pain
22. Being A White Dude Is Harder Than Being Not A Woman Or Not A Person Of Color
23. **Do You Know Hard It Is Being A Woman? Try Being A White Dude. >Then you'll understand...**
24. It's Pretty Hard Out There For A Dude.
25. **Your Life Is Hard? Try Being A. A Dude and 2. White. > Seriously your life is way harder, I just like theatrics.**

The first  
headline  
isn't always  
the best one.



UPWORTHY

# Hey Boss. How You Like Me Now?!

UPWORTHY  
SHARE BETTER

Aug 8 2012

## A Public Service Announcement On Behalf Of All White Dudes

We're straight. We're privileged. Don't get used to it.



Adam Mordechai  
More from

f Share On Facebook Twitter



36x  
THE CLICKS!

click to see @  
UPWORTHY

# The Top 0.3%: Barbie Is Soooo 1956



**Original Title:** GoldieBlox: Engineering toys for girls | LAUNCH VIDEO



## What We Did To It:

**Original Stats:** Posted September 18, 2012 — 32,000 Views



### Why We Think It Did Well:

Everyone has a women friend or a daughter. And they want her to succeed. And there's been a severe lack of toys for them. And the inventor, Debbie Sterling Lewis, made an excellent emotionally uplifting case for such toys to exist. And Edwardo, our curator, totally called out Barbie and her inherent sexism, drawing in clicks. It was our most tweeted post ever.

### How We Got Lucky:

It's almost Christmas. And everyone wants to buy gifts for the little empowered girls in their lives. Sadly they are sold out until April. But you should totally buy one anyway. NOTE: Though the view count is under a million, over 1.4 million people came to our site to look.



Nov 13 2012

**Move Over, Barbie — You're Obsolete**

click to see @  
**UPWORTHY**

Shares: 111,960 Likes: 186,261 Comments: 108,692 Tweets: **617,459**

# STEP 3: Let's Talk About UX, Baby

UX or “User Experience” is basically the science/art of making your site easier to use for your visitors.



# Optimize Prime



Art by Tim Doyle of Nakatomi Inc

- \* Your website is the gateway drug to sharing. Make sure it shares properly.
- \* You should make it as easy to share as possible.
- \* You should always be testing, always adapting, always challenging what works.

## Partier Decided To Pick A Fight With A Tea Party President. It Didn't Go So Well.

gins (who was elected president of Ireland last year) is  
er-the-top Tea Party rhetoric, and he isn't afraid to  
call out radio host Michael Graham on  
health care to foreign policy in this heated exchange.  
Just me, you don't want to miss this one.



Mansur Gidfar  
[More from Mansur »](#)

[Follow](#) [Like](#) 10k

[Share On Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)



Michael D. Higgins. If you enjoyed the highlights, make sure to check out the full interview in context [here](#).

### What people are saying:

**aasif mandvi** [Follow](#)  
"B proud to be a decent American rather than just a wanker whipping up fear"- President of Ireland to the Tea Party. [tinyurl.com/94mptb5](http://tinyurl.com/94mptb5)  
22 Aug 12 [Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favorite](#)

**Richard Dawkins** [Follow](#)  
No ordinary President! Michael Higgins of Ireland praising the real America by attacking the Republican thugs [bit.ly/SUHAug](http://bit.ly/SUHAug)  
23 Aug 12 [Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favorite](#)

**Graham Linehan** [Follow](#)  
Yay! Mickey D's spanking of a tea partier is doing the rounds again! [bit.ly/PplGU](http://bit.ly/PplGU)  
22 Aug 12 [Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favorite](#)

**Christine Bohan** [Follow](#)  
It shows the power of Upworthy that a two-year-old clip of Michael D calling a Tea Partier a wanker is getting huge traction again today.  
23 Aug 12 [Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favorite](#)

UPWORTHY

# All The Cool Kids Are Doing It

We tried showing famous users' tweets on post pages to encourage people to interact more.

It worked.

Aasif Mandvi

Richard Dawkins

Graham Linehan

Christine Bohan

10-30%  
Increase  
In Likes

click to see @  
**UPWORTHY**

Did you already share this? No? Share it now:

[Facebook](#)

[Tumblr](#)

[Twitter](#)

# You Better Fix Your Share Buttons

We added hovering share buttons that scrolled down with the user as they moused over the piece of content.

It seemed to help.

398%

Increase  
In WIN



# It Never Hurts To Ask

We added a doohickey that appears after you finish watching a video and then gently inquires as to whether you would have any interest in hanging out with us more on Facebook. We're of the opinion it just might be doing OK.

419%  
More Like  
ACTION!



# The Facebook Slider Kind Of Helps

[f Share On Facebook](#) [Twitter](#)

Seejane.org If She Can See It, She Can Be It

Share More info

620%

MORE LIKES!!!

We added a hover thinger  
that peeks out after you  
scroll down the page  
and asks you to like us.

It has potential.

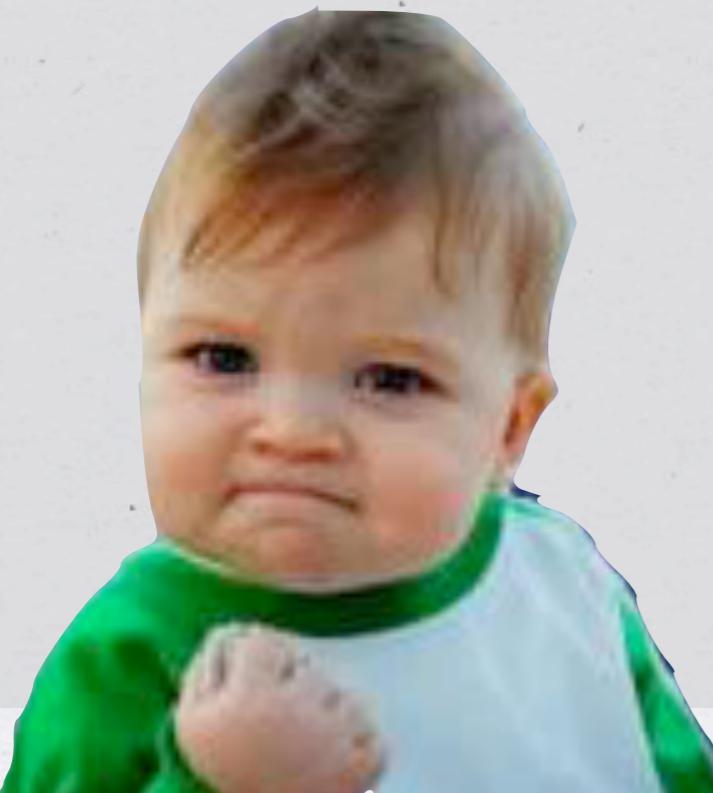
Don't show again.

Like us on Facebook?  
**UP** Upworthy  
[Like 777k](#)

# UX Conclusion:

Make your site focus on  
sharing on Facebook.  
It might help.

Just sayin'.



# The Top 0.3%: Awkward Moments With Mitt

Original Title: Gay Veteran talks to Mitt Romney - ABC News

Original Stats: Posted December 12, 2011 — 929,000 Views



## Why We Think It Did Well:

It's a really honest compelling bit of reality. The hero and the villain are set. Mitt sees a veteran at a diner, saunters on up to do his thing, then discovers he's in over his head. The veteran is amazingly eloquent. Mitt, not so much. The headline sets up the scene perfectly, yet doesn't say what happens next. Extremely compelling.

## How We Got Lucky:

This happened in the primary. It had already had been a modest hit for others, garnering a million views before we got it. It got those views when Mitt was still one of many candidates. We reposted when he was the nominee. It got better.

Shares: 165,172 Tweets: 112,437

## What We Did To It:

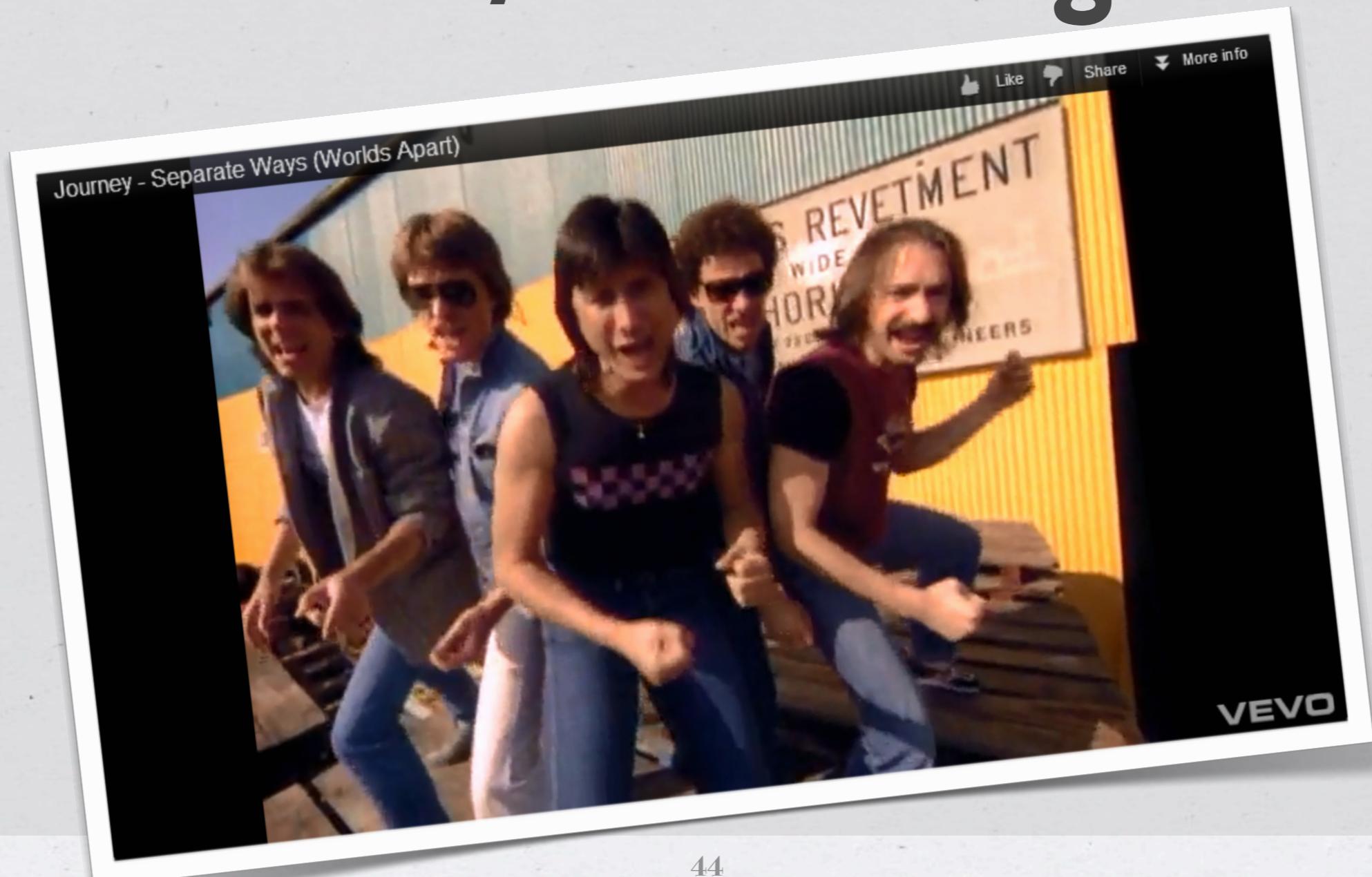


Sep 5 2012

**Mitt Romney Accidentally Confronts A Gay Veteran; Awesomeness Ensues**

click to see @  
**UPWORTHY**

# STEP 4: Don't Stop Testing And/Or Believing



# Always. Be. Testing.

- \* **A/B Test constantly.**

- “Katy Perry and Tim McGraw” garnered twice as many clicks as “Rihanna and Pink Floyd.”
- Test angry vs. passive, short vs. long, questions vs. statements, and anything else you can think of.

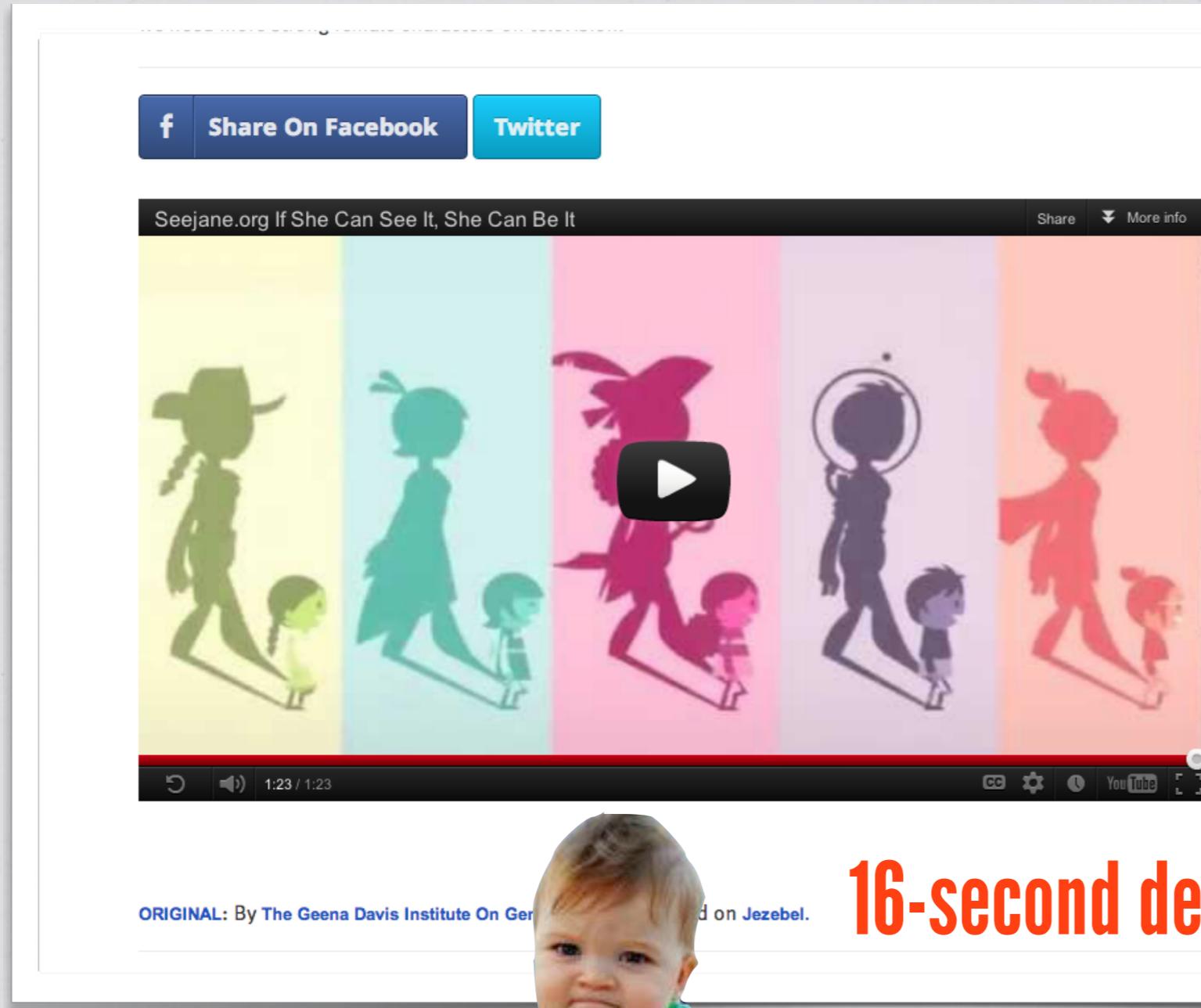
- \* **Google & Twitter Analytics can be great indicators of future victories.**

- \* **Always ask yourself, “Is there another way to do this?”**



# You Can Always Do Better

We added a 16-second delay to the like slider, just to see what would happen.



16-second delay



# It's The Little Things...

Our share text above the share buttons used to say  
“The right time to share this is... Right now!”

We tweaked it.

ORIGINAL: By TED. Found by Kim Hohman, a pretty fabulous Contributing Curator with an eye for beautiful content.

Did you already share this? No? Share it now:

Facebook

Tumblr

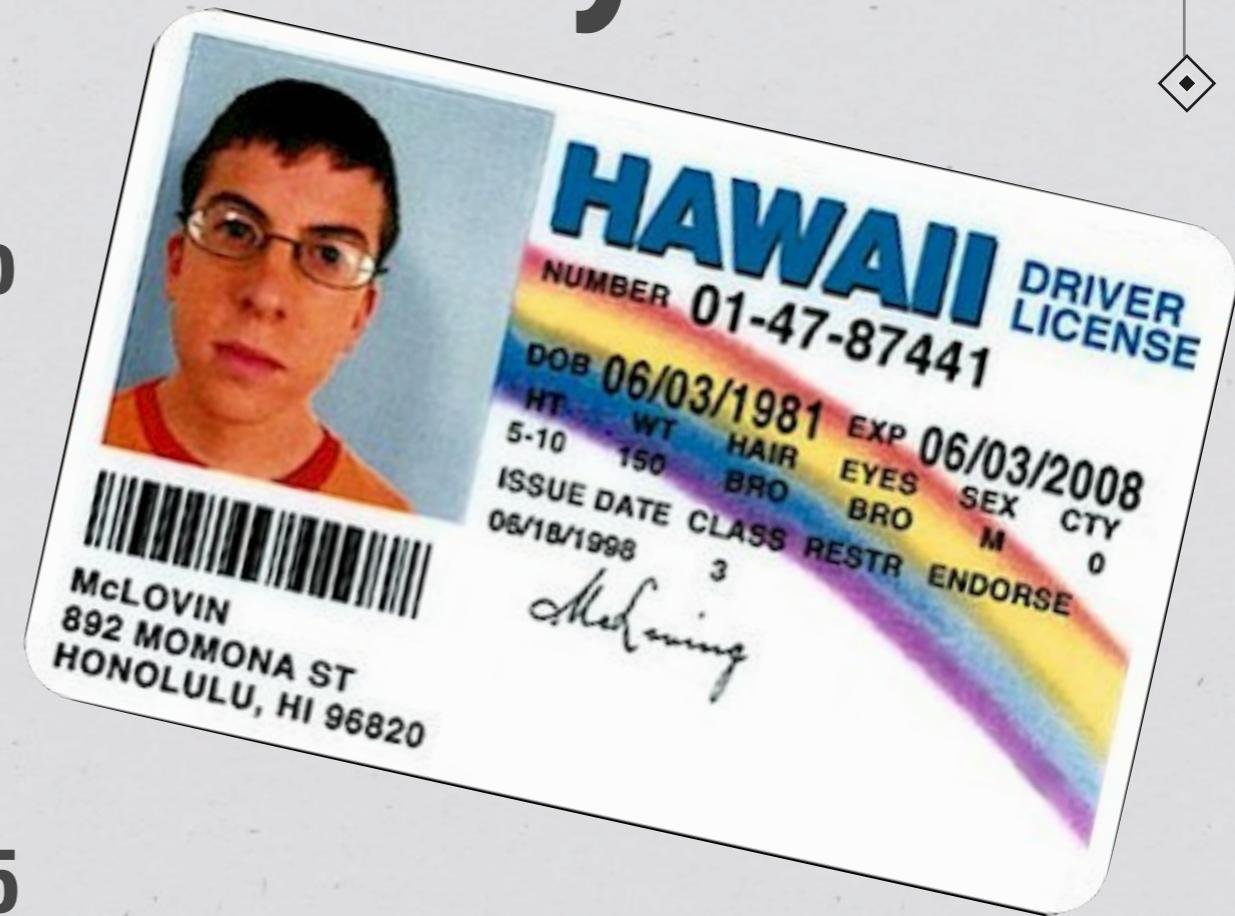
Twitter

Another  
13%

*Increase In Shares!*

# STEP 5: Go Get Lucky

- \* You can't force something to go viral. Even if it's good.
- \* Virality is tough to predict.
- \* Content you love won't always make it. Walk it off and write 25 more headlines.
- \* More content = more chances for a huge hit.



# The Top 0.3%: Our Most Viral. Hit. EVER.

◆ **Original Title:** CBS WKBT News Anchor's On-Air Response to Viewer Calling Her Fat (Oct. 2nd, 2012)

**Original Stats:** Posted October 2, 2012 — We posted the day it went live.

We brought in **4,148,692** views.

## Why We Think It Did Well:

Eloquent hero. Idiotic villain. A beautiful sentiment. And an epic smackdown. Our curator, seeing the potential, pushed as fast as she could to get it out the door. Bully, fat, destroys, and live TV were words we knew would be clicky.

The debate around body image issues created tons of comments on both sides, increasing interaction rates significantly.

## How We Got Lucky:

Some jerk thought it was a good idea to write in and call a news anchor fat. We moved fast enough to get it out before many others.

## What We Did To It:



Oct 2 2012

**Bully Calls News Anchor Fat,  
News Anchor Destroys Him On  
Live TV**

click to see @  
**UPWORTHY**

# TL;DR Again

- 1. CONTENT:** Find and/or create amazing content.
- 2. FRAMING:** Optimize said content to be really clicky on Facebook (for your audience's friends).
- 3. TECH:** Optimize your site to be really good at sharing said content back to Facebook.
- 4. DATA:** Never stop testing your zany theories.
- 5. LUCK:** Capture a leprechaun and steal his lucky charms.

The one that really works the most.



# So No, We Can't Make That Go Viral

But this SlideShare COULD if you were kind enough to share it.



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