

A case study on UK Wool Week and Chanel Airlines

 By [Terry Levin](#)

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This week, 5 to 10 October 2015 saw greener pastures for the UK wool industry, as flocks of sheep were transported into pens in the heart of London's famous bespoke tailoring street.



Image credit: [Preen.inquirer.net](#)

The exercise serves as a great illustrator of a new content marketing approach and one of how to leverage maximum coverage for a brand or cause via both new and traditional media. With regard to the above, not only have crowds of shoppers been flocking to view the sheep in their urban grazing and enjoy the accompanying wool-themed menswear fashion shows, but the commercial activation has been picked up by the media as a news story for business and the front pages of most London-based newspapers, the BBC News, websites across the world, the International Business Times and, locally, the Cape Times Business Report, for its shareability and raising of relevant issues, such as the revival of wool commodity prices and the necessity of long-term sustainability for the wool and related industries.

One may ask whether the above kinds of awareness and success would have been the same if the concept of 'sheep in the urban meadow' had been storyboarded and briefed to a production company for a 30-second TV campaign. Interestingly,

the process of arriving at the concept - the client brief and identifying of the brand objectives - would have been exactly the same as in days of yore, only now it is the execution and the order of events [making the video as it happens] and the crowd-sourced and mainstream media-worthy distribution, that can ensure different outcomes for marketers and brand owners.

The above sorts of activations also hark back to the 'viral' brand aspirations, first alluded to in the 1990s. Although the v-word may have waned in popularity, a combination of traditional and social media is again making the possibility of valuable virality very real.

Chanel's Project Runway

Another case study from the apparel industry comes from fashion house Chanel. This week saw the staging of the category-defying Project Runway Show, featuring an aviation-themed venue, including Chanel Airlines check in desks, liveried attendants, full-sized flight info interfaces, luggage-wheeling models and the fashionista's in-joke reference to Chanel's signature fragrance 'Gate No 5'.



Image credit: Pursuitist.com

The blockbuster event may have cost megabucks, but its out-take lessons are free:

- Having the courage to be true to your brand values can ensure your brand top-of-mind awareness;
- While other fashion label shows may have had moments of memorability, this one integrates the brand presence into every frame in a clever way guaranteeing top-of-mind awareness; and
- If a concept is 'Instagram-able' and has a newsworthy spin, your brand can earn free media coverage and a great content marketing case study in the process.

As it is, Chanel's show stands top of mind from the recent spate of NY, Paris, Milan and London fashion weeks, with Transatlantic coverage from The Huffington Post, The Business Insider, The New York Times and hosts more.

Although seemingly frivolous or banal, the underlying lessons from these case studies may point the way to economic health during tough times. Coming up with breakthrough culture and concepts has always been the domain of ad agencies and design studios. Can new mass-market awareness be achieved by a reallocation of budgets and a shift in emphasis so as not to be forever boxed in to a YouTube window or a 30-second TV spot? What are the challenges facing local companies wishing to capitalise on these sorts of trends?

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