

LEGO ASKS TO ‘REBUILT THE WORLD’

Remind the world of the value of the brand in stimulating the creativity

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Abstract

A community is a group where even if the members do not know each other personally, they recognize each other's existence as parts of the whole and share a set of common practices and experiences. This definition can be undoubtedly attributed to LEGO, one of the best-known companies worldwide. The present work analyses how LEGO interacts with its community members through the usage of social media. Firstly, I will investigate the use of YouTube platform, where LEGO is actively present with the upload of about 6 videos per day. Then I will move to Facebook, where the company often uses viral contents to engage its followers. Finally, I will take in consideration Instagram, which is dedicated to families with its general idea of building together.

This essay is categorized under:

- INTRODUCTION
- SHOW, DON'T TELL
- INVEST YOURSELF, NOT JUST MONEY
- BUILD A RELATABLE STAGE
- CONCLUSION
- SOURCES

KEYWORDS

LEGO, Social Media, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Rebuild, Business Strategy

INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1932 by Ole Kirk Kristiansen, a carpenter who made wooden toys, the LEGO Group is a private company with headquarters in Billund, Denmark. LEGO products are sold in more than 140 countries and in 2014, about two third of revenues were from new products that did not exist the year before¹. The company is committed to the development of children and aims to inspire and develop the “builders of tomorrow” through creative play and learning. After decades of success, countless collaborations, video games and recent movies, LEGO is more relevant now than perhaps it has ever been. LEGO indeed was named by Brand Finance “the World’s most powerful brand” in its Brand Financial Global 500 report (2015): the toy-maker scores highly on a wide variety of measures, such as familiarity, loyalty, promotion, staff satisfaction and corporate reputation². This September LEGO released its first brand campaign in 30 years, asking us to Rebuild the World: the two-minute spot shows scenes in a malleable LEGO world where everything isn’t always as it appears, focusing less on the product itself and more about inspiring kids and adults alike to be more creative with their thinking³. However, even such an adored company could only hold this title for so long without a proper social media strategy in place. Fortunately, the company seems to understand the importance of this new digital environment. The content that LEGO produces for each of its social channels is uniquely tailored. Different platforms attract different audiences, and so content is carefully crafted to match those respective audiences’ expectations. But the ultimate purpose of the content is to foster engagement from fans and followers, and LEGO has designed a strategy to ensure that its social media team are able to engage with the brand’s following at times most suitable for social media users⁴.

¹ <https://www.academia.edu/36419841>

² <https://brandfinance.com/press-releases/lego-overtakes-ferrari-as-the-worlds-most-powerful-brand/>

³ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/martyswant/2019/09/19/legos-cmo-says-a-new-global-campaign-aims-to-inspire-people-to-rebuild-the-world/#6227c7e36a47>

⁴ <https://globalmarketingprofessor.com/legos-social-media-marketing-approach-and-what-we-can-learn-from-it/>

1 SHOW, DON'T TELL

LEGO is currently present across most social media channels, with Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube being the largest ones for the company. LEGO's YouTube channel reached more than 30 million unique users monthly in 2018, with over 8+ million subscribers and 10+ billion visualizations in 2020.

According to the statistics (Socialbakers⁵), Q4 2015 has been the best quarter for LEGO since Q1 2013: their videos received more than 460 million views (fig.1).

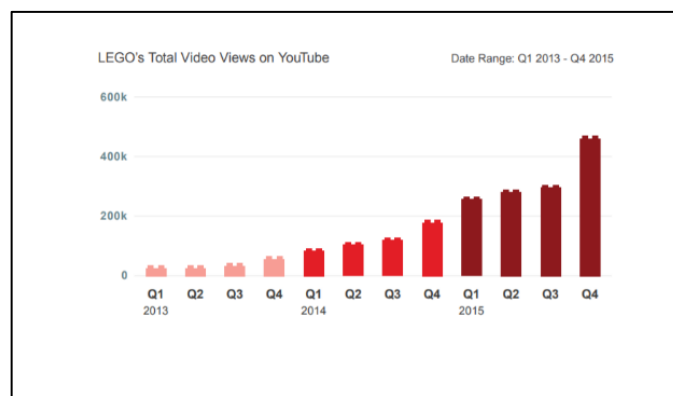


Fig.1 LEGO's Total Video Views on YouTube

This can also be attributed to gaining over 600,000 new Subscribers, most of which they attracted in Q4 (fig.2).

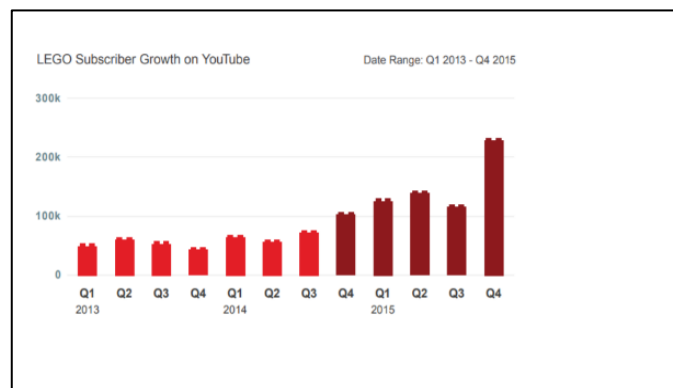


Fig. 2 LEGO Subscriber Growth on YouTube

⁵ <https://www.socialbakers.com/website/storage/2019/12/social-media-resources-studies-lego3.pdf>

If you said video, you are right! Videos are now the most consumed form of content on the Internet. This is a great way to show concepts that are not easily explainable in text form and thus creating high-quality materials that people want to view and share on their networks is the key of success⁶.

This year's YouTube stats show that YouTube is still bigger than all the other social media platforms (and every other website, too, except for Google): people upload 500 hours of video every minute (this number has increased 40% in the five years between 2014 and 2019) and each visitor spends on average 11m 24s per visit on YouTube, 3.25 billion hours of video are watched each month⁷.

In this regard, Lars Silberbauer, senior global director at LEGO Group, highlights LEGO's designer videos as a key example of its success on this channel. They create a ton of content (about 6 videos per day) that is sorted in playlists by category like short movies, superheroes, and cities. In some categories, each video is in a different language, as LEGO tries to appeal to a global audience via one channel. While this can create a headache for someone trying to find a specific video within their video page, it is not as big of a problem as trying to understand all English content when you speak Japanese. The brand shares many basic types of videos:

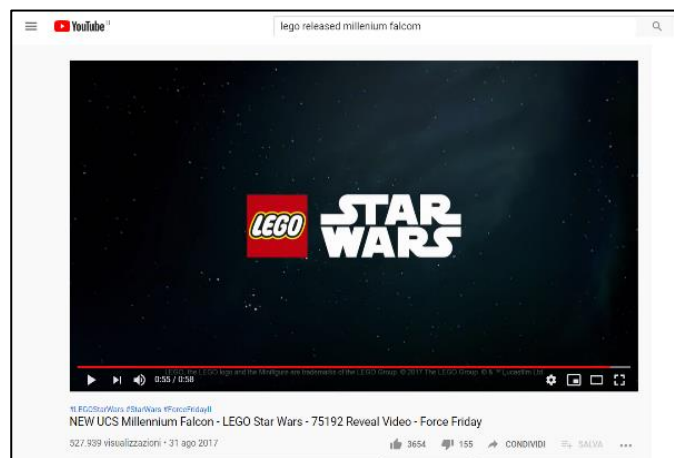


Fig.3 LEGO Millennium Falcon Video on YouTube

⁶ <https://yourbusiness.azcentral.com/importance-youtube-marketing-6034.html>

⁷ <https://blog.hootsuite.com/youtube-stats-marketers/>

advertising for new models, videos of actual LEGO being used and played with and animation of LEGO cartoons. The advertising for Star Wars Millennium Falcon model (fig.3) released in 2017 gather more than 500,000 views, while the Hogwarts Castle (fig.4) 360° video (2018) clocked about a million views⁸.



Fig.4 LEGO Hogwarts Castle Video on YouTube

Most of their videos get between 5,000 and 8,000 views during the first week of posting. Spread those numbers across the up to 70 videos they post in one week, and you get some scary-good numbers: 350,000 to 560,000 views⁹.

⁸ <https://www.cmo.com.au/article/641387/how-lego-infuses-social-media-marketing-play/>

⁹ <https://moz.com/ugc/how-3-very-different-brands-succeed-on-youtube>

2 INVEST YOURSELF, NOT JUST MONEY

Digital transformation for business is no longer optional but is on the top of the minds of most of the CEOs. As digital is bringing all the latest technologies into the game, advertising on social platforms goes viral today and helps great marketing. Engaging with your brand's loyal consumers bring more business and spread word of mouth publicity¹⁰. Among the others, Facebook is a prominent game changer for marketers and the emerging trends indicate that it would be used more by the marketers as they seek more bang for the buck in terms of the returns per dollar spent on marketing and advertising¹¹.

In a climate where 80% of brands promoted their posts on Facebook, especially during special events and the holiday season, 2015 statistics by Socialbakers prove that LEGO promoted on average 20% of their posts and attracts more interactions from organic content than paid posts. Figure 5 highlights that promoted the most posts during the holiday season (between 33% - 37%). Indeed, their most engaging post on

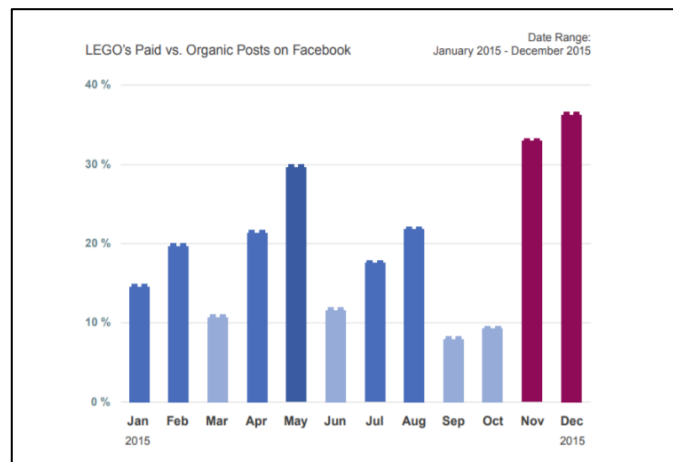


Fig.5 LEGO's Paid vs Organic posts on Facebook

Facebook during 2015 celebrated the release of The Simpsons Kwik-E-Mart set. The post generated more than 100,000 organic Interactions! It is important to note that it

¹⁰ <https://customerthink.com/how-social-media-helps-digital-age/>

¹¹ <https://www.managementstudyguide.com/facebook-as-digital-marketing-tool.htm>

was not just a picture of the iconic LEGO box set; it included a 23-picture album depicting the minifigures in various scenarios¹².

When it comes to investing yourself, not just money. Lego does it. Remember “the dress (fig.6) that melted the internet¹³”?



Fig.6 The Dress That Melted the Internet

LEGO reacted swiftly to take part in the conversation with a brilliant post on Facebook (fig.7).



Fig.7 LEGO's Facebook post on The Dress

¹² <https://www.socialbakers.com/website/storage/2019/12/social-media-resources-studies-lego3.pdf>

¹³ <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/28/business/a-simple-question-about-a-dress-and-the-world-weighs-in.html>

The sociologist Benedict Anderson defines a community as a group where even if the members do not know each other personally, they recognize each other's existence as parts of the whole and share a set of common practices and experiences. With its 13.627.137 followers, LEGO Facebook profile is one such community. That could be good or bad, depending largely on the conduct of users and the decisions made by LEGO to shape relationships among members, yet the very existence of such a large community is important to say the least¹⁴.

¹⁴ <https://smallbusiness.chron.com/importance-facebook-56887.html>

3 BUILD A RELATABLE STAGE

In today's digital age, branding is highly dependent on visual media: they can be more appealing to the audience than plain text, and they can raise emotions leading to actions. Having interesting Instagram posts are a crucial piece to the puzzle when you are trying to increase engagement. This is due to the fact that people will follow a page with content that is intriguing as regards information, education or entertainment. Whether it is an exciting photo or an elaborate infographic, an Instagram post must be able to catch and captivate people scrolling through their newsfeeds while giving them an incentive to follow¹⁵.

When posting on Instagram, hashtags are the best way of getting your content out there and in front of the right people. LEGO has traditionally relied on hashtags in order to collate and categorise content, mainly so that users can easily find and upload related posts. Its hashtag **#LetsBuildTogether** (fig.8) – which consists in reposting



Fig.8 LEGO's #LetsBuildTogether on Instagram

the photos taken by followers or users of their LEGO set – is one of the most popular and commonly used¹⁶.

While LEGO commercials might be more targeted to children, its Instagram

¹⁵ <https://scientificwebs.com/instagram-marketing-strategy/>

¹⁶ <https://econsultancy.com/how-lego-uses-instagram-to-inspire-fans-of-all-ages/>

approach is targeted to older audiences that will buy the product. The aim of inspiring parents is an obvious one, with parents having both oversight of the social media activity of their children and control of their funds to buy LEGO products¹⁷.



Fig.9 LEGO's Instagram Post

Some content is directly geared at parents, with clever LEGO displays illustrating common and relatable family scenarios. At other times, its posts are a little more off-the-wall, designed to be impactful in the feed (fig.9).

LEGO's Instagram presence has grown exponentially since 2014. Socialbakers compared their Instagram performance in Q4 2014 to Q4 2015, during which time they grew their followers by 304%, published 59% more posts, and received 80% more interactions (fig.10)¹⁸.

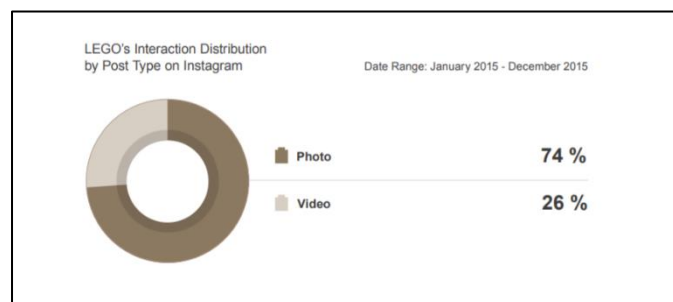


Fig.10 LEGO's Interaction Distribution by Post Type on Instagram

¹⁷ <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/instagram-story-examples>

¹⁸ <https://www.socialbakers.com/website/storage/2019/12/social-media-resources-studies-lego3.pdf>

CONCLUSION

LEGO has embraced social media with open arms, viewing it as a valuable two-way communication channel. Understanding what types of conversations their fan base wants to have with the brand is helping them to identify what products their customers like and want. The foundation of LEGO's prosperity is staying true to their identity and the "LEGO system" by designing products that are versatile even as they expand with popular characters and themes by tapping into new fan bases such as Harry Potter and Star Wars. LEGO understands the importance of their following and the strategic role social media plays for the brand. Their Fans/Followers/Subscribers are not just a vanity metric, they help to improve their name in the eyes' of customers, and are a powerful resource for their innovation strategy. Fans are at the heart of what they do and where they are going²⁰.

"The social needs - why are they are on there? Connect with consumers. What are their human needs on social media, and how can we connect with that? Social media is nothing but a set of technologies that enhance our human nature. Humans are hard-wired to social communication; that is within our DNA. As a business, we need to understand our social needs of our consumers before we take part in that communication".

Lars Silberbauer Anderson,

LEGO Global Director of Social Media & Search

²⁰ <https://www.socialbakers.com/website/storage/2019/12/social-media-resources-studies-lego3.pdf>

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