CRAFTING CONTAGIOUS WORKBOOK
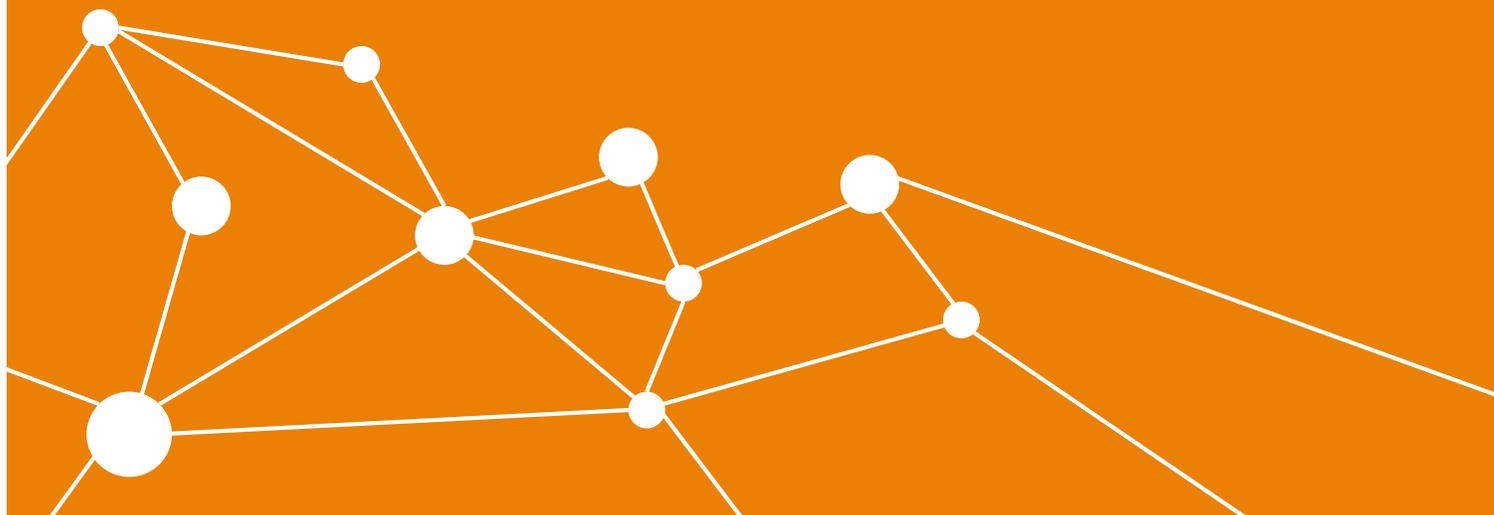
WHAT'S INSIDE

1

YOUR BIG IDEA

You've got an idea. Whether you're trying to get people to buy something, persuade them to do something, or simply inform your audience about something, one thing is certain—you want it to catch on.

To help you make your idea contagious, we'll start with some analysis. The following questions will help you think through what exactly your idea is and the main elements that comprise it.

If you're working on this idea in a team, feel free to bring in others for this exercise. Talking through the various questions will help clarify your objectives and achieve more effective results.

Section 1 will help you define your idea, determine your goal, and evaluate where you stand based on the six key STEPPS. If you think you have that down already, feel free to skip ahead to Section 2, where you'll start applying the framework.

DEFINING THE IDEA

Let's start with the basics: What is your idea as you see it?

....

....

....

....

Now that we have the idea, what is the message you want to spread?

....

....

....

....

Now take two minutes (keep it short) to explain your idea to someone, perhaps a friend or a coworker. Then ask them to repeat it back to you. What did they say?

....

....

....

Does what you wrote above match the way you envision your idea and message? If not, where did the communication break down?

....

....

DETERMINING THE GOAL

Why do you want to get people to talk? What is the ultimate objective of people spreading this message?

....

....

....

....

Take a moment to consider the impact of word-of-mouth on your product or idea. What happens if people talk about it as much as possible? What happens if people don't talk at all?

....

....

....

....

EVALUATING THE IDEA

Now comes the hard part: Objectively evaluating your idea. What does your idea do well? Where is your idea lacking? The more honest and objective you are now, the better off you will be later.

....

....

....

....

Grade how your current idea stands on each of the six key STEPPS, using scores of 1 through 10. Be honest—not everything is a 10, let alone on every element of the framework. Truly understanding where you can improve will help you get there.

ELEMENT	GRADE (1 - 10)
SOCIAL CURRENCY	
TRIGGERS	
EMOTION	
PUBLIC	
PRACTICAL VALUE	
STORY	
TOTAL SCORE	

Given these grades, which STEPPS do you want to focus on? You should still work through each element in the next section, but deciding what to hone in on now will help you dig deeper in the right places.

....

....

....

2

THE STEPPS FRAMEWORK

Over the next few pages, we'll examine how to craft contagious content using each of six key STEPPS. Then we'll reevaluate the idea and decide how to best inject each STEPPS element into your message.

SOCIAL CURRENCY

Status by association. People like to look smart, funny, and in-the-know, so they talk about things that help them portray a positive image. People want things that make them look good rather than bad.

TRIGGERS

People talk about things that are top-of-mind. Using subtle reminders to help them think about your idea will make them more likely to share.

EMOTION

When we care, we share. High arousal emotions——like excitement, anger, and awe ——fire people up. This activation, in turn, drives them to share.

PUBLIC

Built to show, built to grow. People often imitate others. But you can't imitate what you can't observe. Making behavior more public enables social influence.

PRACTICAL VALUE

News you can use. People share things to help others, whether it is advice on saving time, saving money, or making them healthier.

STORIES

Stories are like Trojan Horses: Information travels under the guise of idle chatter. People are more likely to share a memorable story than a list of technical facts and features about a product.

PEOPLE SHARE
THINGS THAT MAKE
THEM LOOK GOOD

SOCIAL CURRENCY

When people talk about my product or idea, they look...

If that's what you want, how can you cement that? If not, how can you change it?

....

....

How can you unleash your idea's inner remarkability (see p. 37-44)? Is there something surprising or amazing that people might not realize? Remember "Will It Blend" (p. 14-18). Even seemingly mundane products like blenders get people talking by finding their inner remarkability.

....

....

How can you leverage game mechanics to get people talking (see p. 44-51)? What elements of performance or behavior can you gamify? How can you create badges that people can share publicly?

....

....

How can you be like Please Don't Tell and Rue La La and make people feel like insiders (p. 51-57)? What can you make either scarce or exclusive?

....

....

Given your analysis above, list three ways you could harness social currency to drive people to talk about your product or idea.

1. ....

2. ....

3. ....

TOP OF MIND,
TIP OF TONGUE

TRIGGERS

.... makes people think about my product or idea.

Why does your product or idea come to mind when people think about what you listed above?

....

....

Consider the context (p. 88-91). Are there prevalent triggers in the environment that you can take advantage of?

....

....

....

Think about Kit Kat and coffee (p. 81-85). How could you grow the habitat and make people think of your idea more often? Can you link your message to a new time or place?

....

....

Is there any way you could be like Rebecca Black's song "Friday" and build a trigger directly into the product itself (p.75-77)?

....

....

List three ways you could harness either existing or new triggers to get people to talk about your product or idea.

1. ....

2. ....

3. ....

WHEN WE CARE,
WE SHARE

EMOTION

My product or idea evokes these emotions:

- [ ] EXCITEMENT
- [ ] AWE
- [ ] SADNESS

- [ ] ANGER
- [ ] FEAR
- [ ] SURPRISE

- [ ] CONTENTMENT
- [ ] HAPPINESS
- [ ] DISGUST

Does the product or idea evoke a lot of emotion? If not, how can you focus on feelings rather than function (e.g., Google's "Parisian Love," p. 112-116). How can you get people to care? What is your emotional core?

....

....

If finding the emotional core is tricky, you can try asking the Three Whys. First, why do people use your product or idea?

....

Why do they want or need that? ....

Why do they want or need that? ....

Are the emotions generated high activation or low activation? How can you "kindle the fire" (p. 116-118) to boost transmission?

....

....

List three ways you could use either existing or new emotions to drive people to talk about your product or idea.

1. ....

2. ....

3. ....

BUILT TO SHOW,
BUILT TO GROW

PUBLIC

Others notice .... when people use my product or idea.

Can people see when others use or consume your product? Why or why not?

....

....

....

If usage or consumption is not observable, how can you make the private more public (p. 136-140)? Can you design the product or action to advertise itself (e.g., like hotmail)? Is there a logo, unconventional color, or sound that could be utilized?

....

....

....

....

What about behavioral residue (p. 144-149)?   Does usage or consumption leave visible social proof behind even after people are done? If not, how can you be like Livestrong, Movember, or Lululemon and create something that lingers?

....

....

....

List three ways you could make your product or idea more public.

1. ....

2. ....

3. ....

NEWS YOU CAN USE

PRACTICAL VALUE

When people currently talk about your product or idea, are they spreading information that other people find useful?

....

....

....

....

How can your product or idea highlight incredible value (p. 168-170)?   Can you leverage the Rule of 100?

....

....

....

....

How can you package your knowledge and expertise into useful information that others will want to disseminate? What area do you know a lot about?   Can you create content that people will share because it saves others time or money or helps them in some other way?

....

....

....

....

List three ways you could infuse more practical value into your product or idea.

1. ....

2. ....

3. ....

INFORMATION
TRAVELS UNDER THE
GUISE OF IDLE CHATTER

STORIES

Are there currently any stories or narratives that consumers like to tell about your product or idea? If you're not sure, search blogs, customer service calls, and any other sources that might be useful.

....

....

....

If there is not a captivating story already circulating, how can you be like Dove's "Evolution" and develop a Trojan Horse (p. 189-193)? Can you weave your message into a story that—while contagious—also features the benefit of your product or idea? Feel free to solicit stories from existing customers.

....

....

....

....

Is your idea an integral detail of the story (p. 193-200)? After all is said and done, will the virality be valuable? Will people be talking about the stunt or event alone, or will they remember the firm and message, too?

....

....

....

....

What are three Trojan Horse stories you could use with your product or idea?

1. ....

2. ....

3. ....

3

YOUR BIG IDEA, REVISITED

Now that you've analyzed your idea based on the STEPPS framework, it's time to consider implementation. Here's a hint: Think back to those implementation ideas you wrote down at the bottom of each of the pages in the previous section. That should jump start your thinking process.

PULLING THE RIGHT LEVERS

Recall your goal and your STEPPS analysis: Which elements of the framework do you think make the most sense given your audience? Why do they make sense?

....

....

....

....

....

....

Do these levers have to be pulled at the same time, or will you use different levers to launch different implementations of your product or idea?

....

....

....

....

....

....

INJECTING THE ELEMENTS

Of all the ways that you identified to apply the STEPPS in the second section, what are the 3-5 top priorities you want to implement?

....

....

....

....

....

....

Now that you know your priorities, how will you actually implement them?

....

....

....

....

....

....

Of course, it's a good idea to take a step back. You've injected the STEPPS framework into your idea. Does it still meet your original goal? Why or why not?

....

....

....

RE-EVALUATING THE IDEA

Once again, it's time for the blunt truth: What does your reformulated idea do well? Where is it still lacking? Is this the most contagious your message can be?

....

....

....

....

Take some time to grade how your reformulated idea stands on each of the STEPPS elements. Understanding what is strong or weak now will help you decide if it has improved.

ELEMENT	GRADE (1 - 10)
SOCIAL CURRENCY	
TRIGGERS	
EMOTION	
PUBLIC	
PRACTICAL VALUE	
STORY	
TOTAL SCORE	

Is the reformulated idea now crafted so that people will talk about it? Is there some way you could pilot or test your new idea before launch to make sure?

....

....

....

....

ADDITIONAL NOTES

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

ADDITIONAL NOTES

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

DO YOU HAVE ANY FEEDBACK ON THE WORKBOOK?
WE'RE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR WAYS TO IMPROVE IT.
SEND SUGGESTIONS TO WORKBOOK@JONAHBERGER.COM.