Going Viral: CDC’s Preparedness Campaigns

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Why Zombies?

@CDCEmergency: “What are you prepared for?”

zombies!

hurricanes!

zombies!
Going Viral

What happened?

- 3 million views between May 16 and June 7
- #CDC and #ZombieApocalypse trended on Twitter
  - Took a tweet a second for over 24hrs
  - Huge brand boost for CDC
- Coverage from every mainstream media outlet in the USA as well as several international outlets.
- Sparked a conversation about personal preparedness
- Created new partnerships
More Zombies

- Posters
- T-shirts
- Graphic novella
- Video contest
- Learning site
- Partnerships
Why It Worked

- Listening to the audience
- Combined relevance
- Sense of humor
- Brand identity
- Timing

"That was quite possibly the only way you could have gotten me to visit the CDC website and actually read an emergency preparedness blog!"

- Blog comment

"Absolutely brilliant approach! Humor with an important preparedness message inside. Plays against the notion that a government agency can't display humor. Really well done."

- Dr. Richard Besser, ABC News

"I have already forwarded it to several friends and will do so to several more! I think this was an excellent idea and a way to make people listen to the things you need during any emergency (not just zombies)."

- Blog Comment
Expanding Our Portfolio

You had me at
3-day supply of food and water.