

Engagement in a Digital World

Online Supplement: Examples of Common Engagement Strategies

Inbal Nahum-Shani
Institute for Social Research
University of Michigan
Contact information: inbal@umich.edu

Steve Shaw
Ross School of Business
University of Michigan

Stephanie M. Carpenter
Institute for Social Research
University of Michigan

Susan A. Murphy
Departments of Statistics & Computer Science
Harvard University

Carolyn Yoon
Ross School of Business
University of Michigan

Examples of Common Engagement Strategies

Engagement Strategy	Definition	Example
Authority	Leveraging the high value of expert or authority opinions on the subject matter of interest (Cialdini, 2007; Milgram, 1963; Zemborain & Venkataramani Johar, 2007)	Doctors' endorsements of pharmaceuticals; seal/stamp of approval or authentication from an expert
Challenge	A test of one's abilities (Csikszentmihalyi, 1993; Fang et al., 2013)	Progressively more difficult levels in video games
Goal-gradient	Endowing or creating the illusion of progress towards a goal (Kivetz et al., 2006; Nunes & Drèze, 2006)	Rewards programs that give users initial 'bonus' credit
Interactivity	Allowing user choices to influence the content delivered by an application (Oh & Sundar, 2015)	An interactive slider tool that allows participants to view images of themselves in the future
Liking	An affinity between two entities (Burger et al., 2001; Cialdini, 2007; Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004; Lynn & Simons, 2000)	Brand loyalty; service relationships; social influencers' endorsements of products
Narrative	Connecting events in a meaningful way (Green et al., 2004; Park et al., 2010)	Narrative context used to help users understand why certain tasks are necessary to make progress in the game (e.g., rescuing birds or killing zombies)
Normative feedback	Making behavioral patterns of a reference group salient or emphasizing differences between the individual's behavior and the most common behavior of a salient reference group (Cialdini, 2007; Schultz et al., 2007)	Signage informing users of the average recycling rates within a specific population; providing information about monthly household energy use by neighbors' relative to the user's
Novelty/Surprise	Heightened positive arousal generated in response to encountering an unexpected stimulus (Kelders et al., 2012; Schubart et al., 2011).	Delivering a prompt containing new content, message structure and/or visual features that were not included before
Personalized feedback	Information specific to the user's previous behavioral patterns (Deci, 1971; Ditto et al., 1998)	Health tracking notifications updating users on their progress towards a goal
Reciprocity	Capitalizing on shared efforts, cooperation, or the tendency for individuals to return favors (Cialdini, 2007; Gouldner, 1960; Pillutla et al., 2003)	Providing a small gift without asking for anything in return
Rewards	Reinforcement of a given behavior through material goods (Deci & Ryan, 1985)	Loyalty program prizes, cash bonuses, lotteries

Scarcity	Limiting the supply of a given resource (Aggarwal et al., 2011; Cialdini, 2007)	Limited editions, 'rare' cards in a deck, flash sales
Self-affirmation	Affirming core values before message exposure (Falk et al., 2015)	Encouraging individuals to think or write about their core values.
Social commitment	Publicly making a claim or stance on an issue; people want to remain consistent (Cialdini, 2007; Cioffi & Garner, 1996)	Facebook posts on an individuals' feed publicly stating that they will vote in an upcoming election
Social proof	Capitalizing on social movements or trends; knowledge of others' behavior in a situation; norms and conformity (Cialdini, 2007)	Number of positive social media shares; reviews and recommendations by reference group
Uncertainty	Using lack of knowledge and inability to predict future events; inconsistency (Baron et al., 1973; Fazio et al., 2015; Skurnik et al., 2005)	Scratch-card discounts, mystery prizes

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