

Rule Reddit

Uncover The Ultimate Way To Go Viral
And Have Your Traffic Explode



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Chapter 1: Introduction

When it comes to digital marketing and promoting websites and businesses online, a lot of attention is given to Google and to conventional social media sites like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. While those are all important and powerful aspects of an online campaign, they are far from the only options available to you and it may just be that there are easier and more effective ways to get a lot of eyes on your business and to increase your sales and profits.

One such alternative avenue for instance is Reddit. Reddit is a site that can get you thousands and thousands of hits from a single post if you get it right and that gives you a direct route to market and an easy way to find a highly targeted audience.

Put simply, Reddit is potentially just as powerful as Facebook or Twitter and possibly even more so depending on your niche/industry. This is something you can't afford to ignore. Read on and we'll look in depth at how Reddit works and how to make the absolute most of this incredibly useful platform. You might just find it's the *ultimate* way to have your traffic go viral and to truly *explode*.

What is Reddit – A Quick Introduction

Reddit is a social bookmarking/link sharing site along the lines of Digg or StumbleUpon. More than this though, it's an aggregated content site where

you can find content voted to the top by other users and thereby selected for its popularity among the community. It was founded by Steve Huffman and Alexis Ohanian who were roommates and students at the University of Virginia and subsequently acquired by Conde Nast Publications in 2006. Today it operates as a separate entity but with Advance (Conde Nast's parent company) as the largest shareholder.

Reddit's mission statement is to become the 'front page of the internet' and it achieves this by letting users select the sub communities (called Subreddits) that they want to subscribe to and then showing them the top voted content for that community each day. You can find these at the URL: www.reddit.com/r/nameofsubreddit. As a rule, any content shared to Subreddits will need to gain a certain amount of traction before it starts appearing on the home page for particular users.

If you were to set up your own Reddit account then, you would be able to select the subjects and -categories you were interested in and then Reddit would show you the top content from each of those categories every day. This would likely include blog posts and other external links, alongside 'self-posts' which are essentially just text posts that are designed to stimulate discussion within the community. You can also choose to view Subreddits on their own and that way only see the latest and most popular links and discussion for that given subject.

Subreddits and the front page alike have multiple separate categories accessible by tabs which include 'Hot', 'New', 'Rising', 'Controversial', 'Top', 'Gilded' and 'Promoted'. 'Hot' is the front page of that sub, while many

visitors will also check 'New' and 'Rising'. 'Top' is comprised of the top voted posts of recent time in that sub based on popularity alone.

As an active user of Reddit you will also be able to upvote and downvote content yourself, thereby influencing which content gets seen and which doesn't. You'll also be able to comment on the posts of others and engage in active discussion. Each time one of your own posts or comments gets up or down voted this will then contribute to your overall 'karma' on the site. You have two separate karma values – one for content you've shared and one for comments you've posts. Other users will be able to click on your profile and immediately see your previous posts as well as your rating. This way your overall karma can end up positively or negatively influencing the respect given to your subsequent posts. Some Subreddits also have 'minimum karma' requirements for posting or even commenting which is a device intended to prevent spam.

Subreddits are ruled over by moderators, as with most forums, and they have the ability to delete posts, to add tags and to ban users. Anyone can create a new Subreddit and in doing so, you automatically become a moderator. At the same time you then have the option to add more moderators to help you manage the page.

Those are the basic rules of Reddit. If it sounds complicated, then that's only because there is a lot going on under the surface. To use Reddit you only need to go to Reddit.com and read what's there. On the other hand, to promote there all you need to do is to create an account and then click the 'submit' button. Understanding the nuances under the surface though will help you to get more from it, both as a consumer and as a marketer.

Why You Should Care

So what does all this have to do with digital marketing and why should you care how Reddit works?

Simply put, Reddit is a hugely popular site with tons of traffic and that makes it exceedingly easy to reach a very targeted audience. Any given Subreddit will provide access to only those who are interested in that subject meaning that you can very easily reach people who are interested in your niche/industry.

There are subreddits to cater to almost every possible interest and hundreds that are set up as jokes, as alternative communities to cater to subgroups of established groups and much more. In other words, no matter what your niche or product is there's probably a place where you can find your exact audience on Reddit.

Moreover, Reddit is also *highly* popular. As of April 2015, the subreddit for Wikipedia (dedicated to sharing the most interesting pages from Wikipedia) has over 150,400 subscribers. 'Funny' is a Subreddit that is shown on the homepage by default and that new users will automatically be subscribed to and currently has 8,229,979 subscribers. At the time of writing there are 9,610 users on the page *right now*.

In February 2015, Reddit had 151,712,210 unique visitors. In a single day there is activity in over 8,700 communities. Most days there are over 1,740,000 users logged in.

It's no exaggeration then to say that a single post, if it performs well and in the right Subreddit, can garner you thousands *upon* thousands of unique

hits in a single day. And this is a process you can *repeat* reliably over and over again in order to build a huge fan base and following for your site *and* to generate immediate conversions and profits.

There's just one catch though: which is that it's not easy...

Which is where this book comes in!

Chapter 2: Identifying Your Audience

The first thing you need to decide when starting out on Reddit is who your audience is and which Subreddits will be best for reaching that audience.

Right from the start, this means you need to look at your own audience. If you don't have a clear idea of precisely who it is you're targeting, then you won't know where to start.

A good exercise for finding your target audience is to profile your 'typical' customer/viewer. This means sitting down with a piece of paper and writing as much as you can down about that person, as though you were a screenwriter creating a character for a movie. Ask yourself: how old is your average customer? How much do they earn? What's their marital status? What's their gender? Their sexual orientation? What are their interests? What do they do on the weekends? Where do they live? Do they have any family?

Of course, very few of your customers are actually going to accurately fulfill this description but instead you're just looking at an 'average'. Some of this data won't be guess work as you'll actually be able to look at your own sales data or conduct surveys to find out.

Once you have profiled your average audience member, you should then give them a name. Let's call our guy 'Jeff'. Now, whenever you make a post, or whenever you look at which Subreddits to post into, you can ask yourself: 'would this reach Jeff'? What kind of Subreddits would someone like Jeff be subscribed to?

How to Find Subreddits

The point to bear in mind is that Jeff is not just going to be subscribed to a single Subreddit. In fact, he is probably going to have signed up to *multiple* Subreddits. And some Jeffs will be subscribed to Subreddits that others aren't. If you have a product aimed at men with beards and you are *only* posting in r/beards, then you will be missing out big time. A post about beard maintenance could also be very popular in r/artofmanliness or r/hipster for that matter. There's even a 'lumbersexual' Subreddit (which is a new term used to describe guys with beards and checked shirts) though it only has 9 subscribers currently...

So how do you find Subreddits that might have your Jeff in them? Ever self-referential (as we'll see repeatedly throughout this book), Reddit actually has Subreddits for finding Subreddits (it wouldn't be surprising if there were a Subreddit for finding Subreddits that list Subreddits).

Reddit.com/reddits provides a list of popular and new Subreddits to check out for instance. Meanwhile, 'r/newreddits' is a place for Redditors to promote their newly created subs which also present new opportunities for you.

One other place to check out is metareddit.com which provides a random selection of subs making it very easy to find new ones. You can literally just keep refreshing the page and that way you'll be able to find subs that you might *never* have otherwise have even thought to look for. Be warned, the rabbit hole goes pretty deep...

A good exercise that you can do right now is to spend some time looking through these subs and then create a spreadsheet or a written note listing

each one alongside some notes of the kind of content that gets shared there. This way you can come back and refer to this list every time you want to make a new post and it will help you find potential places for your content to be successful.

Is This Subreddit Right for You?

But how do you know whether or not a Subreddit is potentially suitable for your content? How do you know if it is going to be filled with receptive Jeffs?

Of course the most fundamental thing to ensure is that the audience there is going to be interested in whatever you're posting. The most obviously interested Subreddits will be those with names that directly reflect the niche/subject you're posting about. If you're posting about beards, then r/beards is a pretty safe bet. If you're posting about r/hair then you *may* be okay.

At the same time, you need to think about the receptivity of your audience. When targeting any audience with content it's always important to ensure that they are not only interested in your subject but also that they are ready to act on what you're showing them and ready to make a post. Are they in a position to buy your product? If you're trying to make direct sales then this is important.

Partly this question is going to depend on the goals of your post. If you're just trying to build an audience, then it doesn't matter too much. If on the other hand you want to make sales, then you need to find a Subreddit that

is filled with people with disposable income and who might be currently interested in making a purchase.

Some Subreddits are predominantly filled with images, which suggests that their users are probably not going to have time to read lengthy amount of content *or* necessarily to visit your site and make a purchase. Ask yourself not just who is viewing a Subreddit but also *when* and *why* - and ask yourself whether they're likely to be susceptible to your message at that point.

A useful tip for researching the popularity of a Subreddit meanwhile is to look at its traffic. Many Subreddits allow you to relatively easily view stats such as monthly page views, unique visits etc. This way you can see not only which sites are doing well but also which are currently on an up-turn or down-turn. To see these stats, visit the sub and go to about > traffic. Often you can find the stats by just going to r/example/about/traffic. This also gives you the ability to see at which times a sub is busiest.

Of course the number of subscribers in a Subreddit is also a good indicator of its popularity for those without detailed stats.

The Big Fish

If you're really keen on targeting the very biggest audience possible on Reddit, then you will want to post to the 'core' subreddits, which are the ones you are automatically subscribed to when you sign up and the ones which you will see on the front page if you don't have a user account. Of

course it's harder to succeed in these subs but if you *do* then the rewards will be huge.

The 'core' subs at the time of writing are:

- Announcements
- Art
- AskReddit
- AskScience
- Aww
- Blog
- Books
- Creepy
- DatalsBeautiful
- DIY
- Documentaries
- EarthPorn
- ExplainLikeImFive
- Fitness
- Food
- Funny
- Futurology
- Gadgets
- Gaming
- GetMotivated
- GIFs
- History

- IAMA
- InternetIsBeautiful
- Jokes
- LifeProTips
- ListenToThis
- MildlyInteresting
- Movies
- Music
- News
- NoSleep
- NotTheOnion
- OldSchoolCool
- PersonalFinance
- Philosophy
- PhotoShopBattles
- Pics
- Science
- ShowerThoughts
- Space
- Sports
- Television
- TIFU
- TodayILearned
- TwoXChromosomes
- UpliftingNews
- Videos

- WorldNews
- WritingPrompts

Big Subreddits vs Small Ones

But before you go on a crusade to find all the biggest Subreddits with the most views, bear in mind that bigger isn't always better. Finding very popular subs is of course a great way to potentially reach a huge audience but it also means that you potentially risk being lost in a sea of content. This is a dilemma that every internet marketer has faced at some point during their promotional strategies and the question you have to ask yourself is whether it's better to be a big fish in a small pond or vice versa.

One big advantage of being in a bigger sub is that it gives you more exposure right from the start. This in turn means that you can generate more upvotes more quickly – which is crucial seeing as the initial surge of upvotes is necessary to gain some initial exposure and momentum. This means that you'll be more likely to be propelled onto the front page which is where you can get seen by the hundreds of thousands of daily visitors. This is *much* harder to do if you start out in a small sub.

On the other hand, being in a smaller sub means that you'll be much less likely to see your content immediately get drowned by other new posts and pushed to the bottom. Even if you don't get many upvotes for a few hours, you can remain on the 'hot' page of that sub or the 'new' page, simply because there won't be any content there.

This can actually be quite a distinct advantage on subs that are visited regularly but aren't posted to all that often. If you look at the number of posts versus the number of subscribers, or the subscribers versus the views, you can find relatively 'static' subs that nevertheless get a lot of exposure. Another advantage of using this approach is that Reddit pages actually tend to perform quite well on Google so this can be good for your SEO.

That said, a static page with few subscribers is not going to get you the same large number of immediate views upon posting.

The best strategy then, is to try and post to a good range of different subs: including some that are smaller and some that are bigger. And this should depend to some extent on the specific goal of that particular post.

At the same time, you also need to understand the general psychology of Reddit and you need to thoroughly research your specific audiences. In the next chapter we will look at how to do each of those things in a little more detail...

Chapter 3: Planning a Successful Post and Strategy

The most important key to success on Reddit is to successfully identify your audience, by which I mean that you need to identify both the nature of 'Redditors' generally *and* the community you are going to be posting in.

This is the single most important thing to understand and to get right. In order to succeed on Reddit, you need to understand the psychology of the average Redditor and you need to understand the kind of content/posting that does well. As we'll see, getting this wrong can actually end pretty badly and even damage your reputation.

You need to plan your posts and your promotions carefully then to avoid a backlash. The following will help you to understand why a little better.

A Warning: Here There be Cynics

The first thing you need to understand about Reddit is that it's actually quite a cynical place. Whereas some sites make it fairly easy to get away with self-promotional posts, Reddit is no such site. The same goes for factually inaccurate information or even just controversial views.

In other words, in any given community, there are plenty of Redditors waiting to call you out, to downvote your post and to contradict everything you say.

If you make a post in a Subreddit promoting your website and you aren't subtle about it/aren't providing any real value, then you can expect multiple posts telling you that your post was pointless, that it brought nothing new, that you're just trying to promote your business and that your product/service looks rubbish anyway. This can then result in a 'landslide' of negativity resulting in countless downvotes and possibly even getting your account banned.

Sometimes this is fully justified and if you are indeed just posting blog spam then you probably need to prepare yourself to take some slack. In other cases though, these negative responses can be simply overly harsh. There is no easy way to put this: Reddit can at times be a somewhat mean-spirited place.

To give an example of how unkind Reddit can be, as well as its self-referential nature, it's useful to consider the Subreddit 'Fitness Circle Jerk' ([r/fitnesscirclejerk](https://www.reddit.com/r/fitnesscirclejerk)). This is a Subreddit with about 7,131 subscribers that is dedicated entirely to *mocking* other members of Reddit.

The Subreddit was created by moderators and active users of the [r/fitness](https://www.reddit.com/r/fitness) sub. Here many users would get tired of people posting the same questions about fitness, making incorrect statements or showing off. As such, 'Fitness Circle Jerk' was set up simply to call those people out. Unfortunately though, it appears to be visited mostly by bitter types who take pleasure from laughing at others. If someone posts a video of their squat technique to [r/fitness](https://www.reddit.com/r/fitness), then they might well find themselves being ridiculed over at [r/fitnesscirclejerk](https://www.reddit.com/r/fitnesscirclejerk). The same goes for fitness bloggers who have controversial views on matters such as 'low carb vs low fat' or CrossFit.

Whether or not the views are valid, interesting or well intentioned, the established groupthink on the big fitness sites has too much momentum and posts that challenge this status quo can be very harshly received.

Likewise, there are a lot of users on Reddit who think of themselves (rightly or wrongly) as experts in their subject. If you post an article on 'how to get big arms' and they think your information is wrong, then they will follow up by posting study after study showing how you're wrong, telling people that your advice is dangerous and generally damaging your reputation.

The same is true for just about any other niche or industry on Reddit. If you post on a web design forum then you better hope that you are bringing something interesting or new to the table and that you aren't obviously promoting a service. If you post about science or history then you should check and *double check* your stats.

As you can imagine posting and getting that much negative feedback – with users even going as far to set up new posts ridiculing you – is potentially very bad for business. So you need to be careful.

Researching Your Subreddit

One of the best things you can do to avoid getting your content ridiculed and downvoted before you post, is to put in some time upfront to research the sub you're going to post in.

The first place to start here is with the rules of that sub. These will normally be posted along the right hand side, or if you go to the sub itself and click

'submit' (rather than submitting from the front page) they will appear over the submission form.

These rules will generally include some general guidelines as well as some hard-and-fast 'laws' that you have to adhere to. For instance, some subs will tell you that there should be *absolutely no 'blog spam'* or that posting links to your *own* blog is forbidden. You can save yourself a lot of time and trouble by simply avoiding these subs altogether.

(On a side note, it's a somewhat sorry affair that author-submitted links are so frowned upon. While it's understandable that subs might not want outright spam on their blog, there are of course many great blog posts that provide plenty of value and there's no reason that the creators of those blogs shouldn't be allowed to share the content they create. After all, why shouldn't you share interesting content you created that you want people to discuss? Why is it worse to create something new that provides value and to share it, than it is to simply find similar posts and share them? What is wrong with trying to promote yourself? And if you can't do it on social bookmarking sites, where should you be permitted to?)

As a blogger, webmaster, business owner or internet marketer you will likely feel similarly. Unfortunately though, that's just the way it is and we're not going to change it any time soon. Your best bet then is to just play along...)

While some blogs explicitly forbid self-promotion, there are a *few* out there that actually encourage it. If you have created a game or app that is also a game for instance, then you can share it to [r/playmygame](#) which is actually

for people to promote their indie games. If you charge for the game and you're a big developer though, you might not get *as warm* a reception.

Some subs also don't allow link posts meaning you can't create a post *just* to link out to a blog post. This is not actually a huge problem however, as you can get around it by creating a self-post (text post) and including a link to your site. Be careful again though, as this can sometimes rub people up the wrong way.

If you *are* trying to include a link in a self-post, a good strategy can be to include multiple links to support your points with *only one* of those being a link to your own site or blog. We'll look in more detail at how to choose between link posts and self-posts in a later chapter.

Another thing to look out for in the rules is whether or not you need to use tags. Some subs will require that you use tags like [news], [discussion] or [blog] alongside your title. If you fail to do this, then your post might be immediately deleted.

Also important when researching a sub is to spend some time looking at the kind of content that is doing well there, reading the types of comments that get received and generally trying to understand as well as possible the psychology of the users on that page. This way you can decide whether your content is likely to succeed there and also how best to *portray* your content in that sub.

In short, whenever you post to a sub for the first time, spend a while getting to know that sub, looking at how the most successful posts are formed and thinking carefully about how to get the best response.

A Good Trick for Avoiding Backlash

One good trick for avoiding a backlash is to avoid posting to directly relevant subs and to instead post to subs that are only somewhat related. To go back to Jeff and our beard posts, let's look at two possible approaches and two possible outcomes:

Strategy 1: Posting an Article Called 'Why Have a Beard' to r/Beards

If you post an article called 'Why Have a Beard' to the main beards Subreddit, then this will right away have the advantage of ensuring you reach a *lot* of Jeffs, all interested in beards. If you also sell a beard product from your site and you manage to get enough upvotes and views, then you *may* make a bunch of direct sales and thus it could be considered a successful and profitable post.

On the other hand though, you *may* also risk a backlash. For starters, you are preaching to the choir. If you post about having a beard and you don't have enough details, then those readers may suspect you in fact don't know anything about beards – and they'll crucify you as a result.

Alternatively, they might just feel that your generically titled article doesn't really tell them anything new and that it's clearly promotional without adding value. Again, this is a quick way to get lambasted.

At the same time, posting to a sub full of beard owners means that you might not reach any *new* customers. Perhaps they already have all the beard products they need and perhaps they even already read your site regularly.

Strategy 2: Posting 'Why Have a Beard' in 'R/MensFashion'

Or alternatively 'r/artofmanliness' or 'r/manliness'. In this case, your post is still going to be relevant and is still going to reach a lot of Jeffs. Why? Because a Jeff who subscribes to Beards is quite likely to subscribe to MensFashion too.

But at the same time, you'll also reach some Jeffs and maybe some Geoffs (we are really laboring this metaphor) who don't already have beards... but may *want* beards once they learn about them. Now you're providing new information to a group that might find it interesting. It won't get picked apart to the same extent because they are beginners and it will provide something they haven't heard before.

There is a thin line to walk here. If you post in a category that is *too* far from the subject you're discussing then you might come under fire for not staying relevant to the topic. What's more, your post might simply get deleted. Posting about beards to 'mensfashion' is fine, posting it to 'r/bodybuilding' is far more tenuous and will likely get you banned. This will be seen *even more* as a flagrant attempt at 'blogspam'.

To avoid this problem though, you can even go one step further and create new content designed specifically to bridge a gap between two niches or two target audiences. For instance, if you *did* want to try and bring in followers from 'r/bodybuilding' then a better strategy might be to write a post called 'The Top Bodybuilders With Beards' or 'Why Every Bodybuilder Should Have a Beard'. This way you can create directly relevant content that is completely new and different to what's gone before and that can help you avoid looking derivative or clichéd too.

So tread carefully. But *do* consider the value of expanding your target audience slightly and posting to a slightly broader category. This is a great way to avoid serious criticism *and* to bring in potential new customers who otherwise hadn't considered your product line/services and who might appreciate an introduction to a new niche.

Managing Your Profile and Karma

Managing your profile and karma is also an important part of your strategy. While many users might focus simply on posting promotional content, this approach can be limiting if you don't also consider the 'long game'. In other words, make sure that you are also thinking about how you're going to build authority and respect on Reddit – both in terms of Karma *and* in terms of actual recognition.

What's key to keep in mind here is that if you keep posting content that has an even slight 'promotional' edge to it, people will start to recognize your username and downvote your content automatically. At the same time, if someone sees a new post of yours that's getting a lot of attention, they might then research you by looking at your username and seeing your previous posts. You'll lose a lot of credibility if it appears that all you ever do is post to promote yourself, or if you have a karma score in the - 1,000s...

As well as posting your own content and links then, you also need to ensure you are an active member of the community and that you are commenting regularly with things that will likely get upvoted. Comments that tend to do well are often funny, or provide some sort of use to the

reader. For instance, if someone is asking a question about how to fix their computer and you can provide a useful tip in a response, you will likely get at least one upvote from that user and probably more from others. Try to see every question as an opportunity to demonstrate your expertise and knowledge and to build your reputation and karma.

In general, the key to building a popular Reddit profile is the same as creating a successful blog or website: that means you're providing *value*. Whether that's comedy value, entertainment value or value in the form of information doesn't matter so much.

Creating Multiple Accounts?

Of course there are many good ways you can artificially inflate your success on Reddit, with the most obvious being to create multiple accounts which you can then use to promote one another. This way you can upvote the content you post yourself and see your karma score grow as a result. Likewise, you can use multiple Reddit accounts in order to ensure that your new posts get the initial 'boost' they need in order to gain momentum and to really succeed.

As you may imagine though, this is a practice that isn't exactly encouraged by Reddit though and so you need to be careful lest your accounts get banned or your posts removed.

Having multiple accounts *can* be useful in order to occasionally nudge the tide in your favor in a hot debate, or to give yourself a second chance if one

account should get shut down. That said though, you shouldn't rely on this strategy and you should use it sparingly.

Chapter 4: What Type of Content Thrives on Reddit and Gets Shares?

With all that in mind, you might be wondering which types of posts *do* well on Reddit. What kind of content will get 100, 200, 1,000 upvotes and make it to the front page?

We've seen how you can improve your chances of success by finding the right sub, by doing your research and by building your reputation gradually over time. But ultimately what is *really* going to determine your success is how good the content you're posting is. How do you go about posting something that will get tons of likes and tons of shares?

Content That Thrives

The basic point to understand here is that content that thrives on Reddit is generally the same content that thrives *on the web*. And the way to create this type of content is something that's changing constantly as the web grows and develops but right now, the single most important factor is that this content is *smart*.

The internet you see, is getting smarter. It's been around a while now and as such we have become far more savvy as users. We've seen that generic, derivative content (Top 10 Ways to Get Abz!!!) a million times and we can smell 'promotional content' a mile off. Meanwhile, Google's algorithms have gotten smarter meaning that Google is better at spotting

ads. To succeed online you need to be smarter and you need to write content that is intelligent, engaging and that has an 'X-Factor'.

This is *particularly* true for Reddit. For all we have said that Reddit can be mean-spirit, it is also a place that attracts a lot of very smart and a lot of very well-read users. You only have to read through the comments section of any Reddit post in order to quickly see that Redditors are generally very witty and very funny. They are self-referential, cynical, sarcastic, mean and hilarious. Dumb content here just *isn't* going to work.

So if you run a web design company and you're about to create a post with the headline:

'Scratch Old! Get Great WordPress Web Design and Get New Visitors'

Then you can stop right there. This is *not* going to succeed.

Earlier we discussed a posting about bodybuilders with beards. This is a much better idea. Why? Because it is completely unique. Because it has a very specific target audience. Because it is funny. And because it has a highly visual nature that will invite clicks.

Similarly successful would be any post that looks at a topic in an entirely new way. Want to post something to r/parkour (free running)? Then forget 'how to backflip' because it's been seen a thousand times before. Instead, how about 'The Psychology of Parkour – Why We Jump off Roofs' or how about 'Can Ambidexterity be Useful for Parkour'. These again are topics that offer a *new* angle, that sound interesting, that can stimulate discussion and that offer some real value. For someone who loves parkour, they've probably heard just about everything there is to hear about backflip

technique and jumping. Ambidexterity is something completely new and interesting.

The single most important test you should give *any* new content you're thinking of creating and sharing to Reddit is this: would *you* read it? Would it catch *your* eye? Would you stop what you were doing and actually be excited to sit down to it with a cup of tea? If not, then you need to rethink your strategy.

The Psychology of Sharing and Upvoting

Another important point is that you should try to get inside the heads of people who share and upvote and why they do.

This is a very important question and it's probably not as straightforward as you think.

People upvote because they've read your content and enjoyed it right? And they share for the same reason?

Well actually, in many cases, the answer is 'not really' on both these fronts.

For starters, recognize that the vast majority of people will *not* upvote or share your posts even if they're amazing. If you have a post that has 80+ upvotes then you can consider that a big hit for Reddit. How many actual visits can you expect to get from that? About 4-6,000 (this is from experience). That's means only a very small fraction are upvoting. If you use Reddit, how often do you upvote?

When you upvote, you stand to gain nothing from doing so and no one will even know you've done it. That means you're only likely to do it if you really care about either the subreddit (i.e. you are a moderator or a regular visitor) or if you really care about the post (it really pulls on your heartstrings or angers you).

The best way to get upvotes then is to make posts that have some kind of *emotional* resonance with the views of that sub. That means you need to post things that people can really get behind or that people will think can greatly benefit the other visitors of the sub. So if there's a subject that you feel passionate about or that you're constantly ranting about, this may just be excellent fodder for Reddit. Annoyed at how people are always eating your sandwiches at work? Then post about it! Although you better make it different as this is a pretty done-to-death subject.

Now onto sharing. Why do people share? Again, very few people who read your content will share it and actually a lot of people will share it who *haven't* read it. This might seem odd but again experience shows this to be true. It's not uncommon to post an article to Facebook, to see it has 20 likes, but likewise to find the page has only had 3 hits. Those people liked the content without even reading it!

So why do they like it? Well they will have liked it based on the title and on any images alone. The same goes for sharing to Reddit a lot of the time and upvoting.

There are three reasons people do this:

1. Because they think the content is perfect for *someone else* and they want them to see it

2. Because that content facilitates communication
3. Because that content says something about *them*

An example of the latter point would be your beards article on 'Why You Should Have a Beard'. Beards are very popular right now and very trendy which is one reason we're using them as an example. Thus, many people currently get a lot of happiness from their beards and have even *formed their personality* around the beard to an extent.

As a result, they will be highly likely to share a post about beards just to tell the world about their love for beards and to further express themselves. And they might do this *even without reading the post*.

People are likewise very likely to share and upvote posts about religions, charities and other subjects all without reading – just because 'in theory' they are things they want to represent themselves with.

As for facilitating communication, this is another interesting point: content that helps someone to make a point or that sparks a discussion will often get shared.

This is one reason that large posts that provide a complete overview of a subject are often so popular. These tend to be a big hit because users can then link to them in order to bring someone up to speed on a subject they're going to discuss. Likewise, controversial posts will generate more discussion and attention (thus potentially making it to the 'Controversial' page on a sub too).

A great example of this is a set of videos that a vlogger created for 'The Idea Channel'. These videos explained flawed arguments that people often

use, breaking down terms like 'Strawman Fallacy' and the 'Authority Fallacy'. These videos could then be used by Redditors and other social media users within discussions in order to undermine whatever another user was saying in a debate. Here the content facilitates conversation.

Remember, as many users might not actually read your content, your title is *everything*. That's also what will ensure your content gets clicked in the first place (although some subs have a thumbnail which helps). The key here is to accurately describe your content while selling all of its biggest points. Think: what is the most interesting aspect of your content? What is the 'value proposition' (i.e. how will it benefit the reader?) and what can you say about it that will encourage cynical readers to at least pause? A little mystery can help to spark curiosity too – but be wary of using 'Buzzfeed-esque' clickbait titles as they can often garner a bad reaction. It's safe for instance to mention a technical term that people might not have heard of (cognitive behavioral therapy, l-theanine, accelerated cardio) but avoid things like 'You'll Never Guess What This Person Does Next!' as that will just make Redditors angry.

Chapter 5: On Making Self-Posts

The above describes the best strategy for creating content and sharing it on Reddit but what if you want to create a 'self.reddit post'? What if you just want to make a text post in order to have a discussion on Reddit?

This is actually a very useful strategy in many cases, particularly because self.posts by their very nature *appear* less like self-promotion thus meaning they're less likely to garner a very negative reaction. At the same time, using text posts allows you to provide a little more backstory and explanation for whatever you're posting about, thereby explaining yourself and providing context.

Using Self-Posts to Improve Your Karma

If you just want to improve your karma, then using self-posts is a particularly good way to do so. As mentioned, self-posts will generally appear far less like self-promotion and at the same time, they allow you to put across your personality.

Self-posts also have a lot more potential to succeed on the big 'core' subs that we discussed earlier. If you want to post something that will end up on the front page, then a great place to target is somewhere like 'r/TodayILearned'. TodayILearned is simply a sub for posting interesting facts that you discovered and that are likely to be interesting to lots of other people too. These can range to almost *any* subject and usually start with the acronym 'TIL' with the entire fact right in the title.

One example that's on the front page right now is:

TIL In the early 1930's, Warner Bros. began producing animated shorts specifically for the purpose of promoting music owned by the company. They were called "Looney Tunes."

Right now this post has 3,926 upvotes!

Another great example of this is ELI5, which stands for 'Explain Like I'm Five'. This is another post that accepts posts on pretty much any topic and which can garner a lot of upvotes if the question is something that a lot of people are curious about. Here is a current example:

ELI5: When I unplug my speakers and touch the end of the cord with my finger what is the sound coming out of the speakers?

These sorts of posts are an excellent way to generate huge amounts of karma which can then help you to get more respect when you post subsequently – even if those posts are promotional.

Using Self-Posts for Self-Promotion

Self-Posts can also be used to share your own content though too or to promote your business. Another good example of how you might choose to use a self-post is to create an extensive introduction to a subject that appears to be completely selfless.

For instance, if you are a personal trainer, then you could create a huge in-depth and unbiased post on all of the most common strategies and tips for getting a six pack. This provides real and obvious value to all of the readers

of that sub and if there is no link to your own site then there's no reason that it should be offensive enough to get downvoted.

But at the same time, this can actually be enough to get you posts and offers for work. If that post should get 1,000 upvotes, you can bet you'll get a few private messages from people asking you if you'd write them a training program for remuneration. The same goes for any other subject. Write an in-depth guide to SEO (Search Engine Optimization) and you might find people start asking you to promote their site for them. This is *without* linking out to any external page or content.

At the same time though, you can also use posts like this in order to promote your own pages. As mentioned earlier a good way to do this is by creating a post with lots of resources and external links and then including your link *among* them. If the post explodes then you'll still generate enough clicks from that for it to be more than worthwhile.

Chapter 6: Advanced Techniques and Conclusion

Following all the advice in previous chapters is more than enough to start *repeatedly* generating huge amounts of traffic to your content while avoiding the most common pitfalls. If you feel like you now truly understand the type of content that succeeds on this platform, you'll find that you can win *every time* and that this gives you access to almost unlimited visitors.

If you want to take things a little further though, there are a few more advanced techniques you can use as well. Consider the below for extra credit...

Creating Your Own Subreddit

If you are having trouble finding a Subreddit that perfectly suits your niche or target audience then there *is* another option. Of course that is simply to create your *own* sub in which case you will get to be the moderator and to decide which content thrives there and who is allowed to post.

Creating your own Subreddit is actually very easy and completely free and there's no limit to how many you can create. What's more, you can actually add a permalink to your site right on the front page in the information along the right hand column.

Creating a Subreddit is a highly powerful tool then but you shouldn't expect people to flock to it right away without any incentive. This is another good

reason to put some time and effort in to build your own reputation and to cement yourself in the community – that way you can more easily convince people to migrate over to your community. Make sure that your sub fills a real niche that people are looking for and that it provides real opportunity for interesting and unique discussion. At the same time, keep it relevant to your business or website.

Make sure as well that you promote your new sub as you would a website or a social media page. You can promote it in r/newreddits, as well as on your own website/social media channels, on forums and more. Make sure you post to it regularly yourself in order to generate momentum and interest. If you have lots of visitors to your website, then consider recruiting some to be moderators.

Reddit Tools

If you find all this to be a little tough going, then there are a few tools that can help. One excellent one is **IFTTT** or If This Then That, which allows you to connect your Reddit account to some other online social tools. For example, you can use this to share your WordPress blog posts to a Subreddit automatically. Alternatively you can get emails every time someone mentioned you in a Reddit post, or you can save everything you upvote automatically to Evernote. There are tons of uses for this tool and it can be instrumental in your successful Reddit strategy.

RedditPics meanwhile is a tool that scrapes pictures from Reddit and lets you see them all easily on one place – about 200 on a page. **SubReddit Finder** is another tool for finding new topics and subs while the **Reddit**

Enhancement Suite provides numerous tools to make it easier to browse content and stay generally active on the site.

And don't forget the countless apps on Android, iOS, Windows Phone and Windows 8.1 that make browsing and commenting easier from mobile devices.

Sharing Buttons

It's not just down to you to promote your content on Reddit. By using WordPress plugins and other methods, you can let your visitors share your content on Reddit *for you*. This can be highly effective when it happens, as they can be much more blatant about sharing your link because it's not theirs and it's not self-promotion. If you have a captive audience on your site already then you can even try asking them directly to share to Reddit.

Posting Links in Comments

A strategy that is used less commonly on Reddit but which can actually be highly effective is to promote your content in the comments on *other* existing posts.

Like the posts themselves, comments that get up or down voted will appear closer to the top or bottom of the page and if you try to promote yourself too blatantly then you'll get downvotes and your link won't be seen. *But* if someone should post a question and you have written a blog post that answers that question well, you can always include it as a resource along with the answer. This way you can jump onto a post that is generating

momentum and your link can benefit from its success. In this way, Reddit can be used to promote a site in a similar way to something like Yahoo Answers or Quora. You can even post questions yourself and then answer them if you have two accounts. Just make sure you use the same strategies as before to avoid looking blatantly self-promoting and to make sure your content is interesting and adds real value. Otherwise this can be a very quick way to get *lots* of downvotes.

Conclusion

Wow. So there you have it: a bulletproof set of principles and strategies to apply so that you can start building massive traffic from Reddit. Of course there are other strategies and methods out there and you're likely to find that there's nothing *quite like* learning on the job.

Nevertheless, you should hopefully now be brimming with ideas and inspiration for how to start making a big hit on Reddit. The single most important things to take away are that you need to be providing *real value* and that you need to offer intelligent content that hasn't been seen before. Don't be derivative, don't be obviously self-promotional and think of a strategy for each and every post.

If you can do that, then you can have Reddit eating out of your hands. And the best bit? Most of these tips can be transferred to other forums, social bookmarking sites and more!