



**Guidelines to Getting Early
Adopters to Advocate Your Brand**

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When Everett Rogers completed research from 508 interdisciplinary studies to develop his Diffusion of Innovation model, he could not have predicted the depths to which the early adopters (EA) would be instrumental in brand relations worldwide. Capturing the attention of the EA has become second nature in business because they lead the rest of the market. Below are steps to cultivate an atmosphere that will allow the EA to spread the word of your brand.

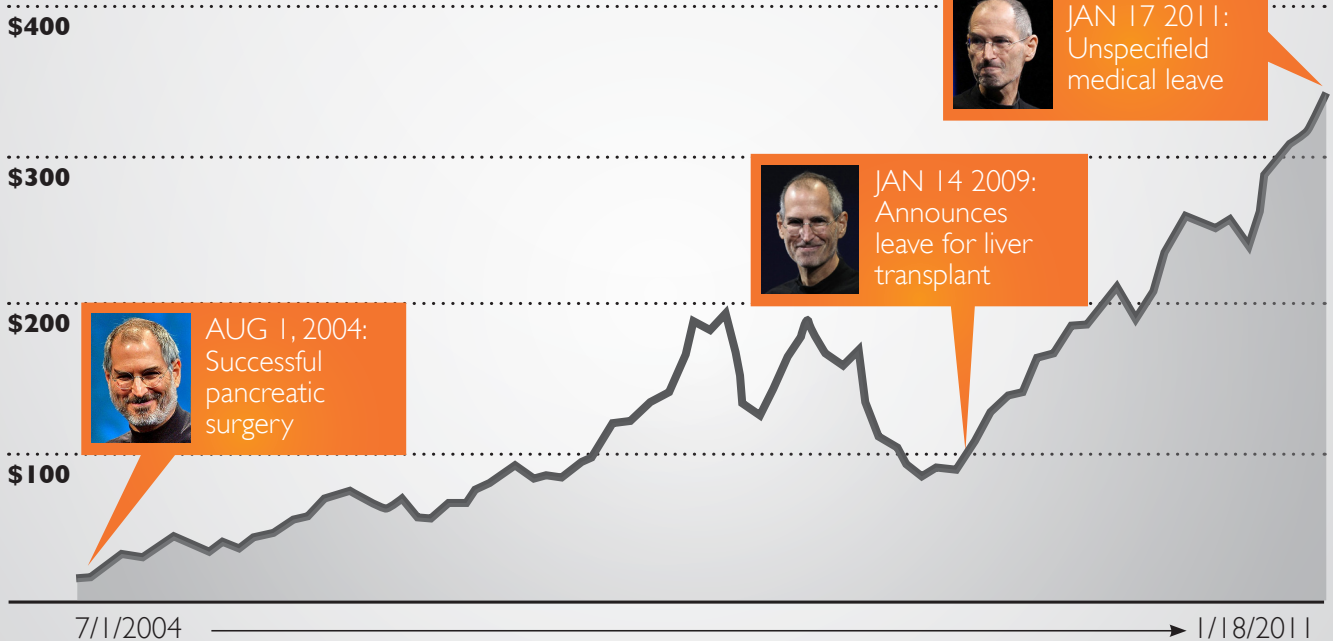
1. CONNECTION

There has to be a connection with your audience. For tried and true brands like StarWars, Apple and LouisVuitton, creating a connection to a new product is easy. Their fan

base, at the very least, already know about the brand story and find connection through that. A connection can be achieved to the product or more powerfully, to a person. Inventors that go to a crowdsourcing site to gain funding are creating connections to the product and to themselves. EA are willing to buy into the idea because they believe in the product and the person behind the product.

The EA needs a connection to a person, product or idea before they buy into a brand. A good connection will involve a strong connection to both the product and the person. Take Steve Jobs and Apple for instance. Every time that he took a leave of absence from Apple, their stock prices dropped. Immediately after his death the [stock dropped 3%](#) which led to a ten billion dollar loss for the company. His death shows that there are consequences for not being able to balance the two effectively. Unique marketing campaigns, sleek design and easy to use interfaces are not enough.

THE STEVE JOBS EFFECT



2. ENGAGEMENT

In the world of social media, engagement acts as currency to expanding awareness of your cause. No one can afford to not engage with their audience. This may be in the form of competitions showcasing your audiences' talents or even gifts for funding your product. Whatever the method, when you engage with your audience they become your best advocates.

Brands create an opportunity for growth when they open themselves to interaction with their followers. This is as simple as having a social media presence or creating other platforms of interaction. Comedian Jimmy Fallon does a great job of this when he creates his own hashtags which more often than not trend in America and worldwide as is evidenced by his 32.7 million followers. Making a connection with the EA is like sparking a fire and engagement is what fans the flames. When Jimmy Fallon creates #momtexts, his followers want to be a part of the conversation and are likely to share it with others in their communities.

3. ANTICIPATION

Building anticipation for a product is an artform. You want to give them enough to tease and keep them interested but not too much so that they get bored. Providing little clues about what goes on behind the scenes gives audiences something to talk about. In the case of Star Wars, many theories arose as to why Luke Skywalker is not seen in any of the trailers or posters.

The unknown builds anticipation which creates a buzz of excitement around your issue.

4. COMMUNITY

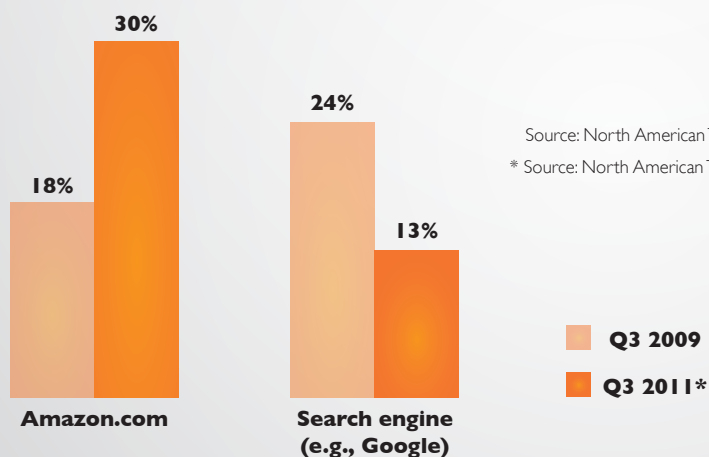
There is something to be said about a group of people with a unified idea and identity. In some ways building a community is the easiest part of galvanising the EA. If the previous steps are done well a community can emerge organically. They are the ones that will spread your good news because they believe in it. Their faith in what you do will cause others to follow.

EAs are passionate about their interests be it gaming, music or beer. They rely on the input of opinion leaders as well as others before purchasing a product. A study by [Forrester research](#) shows that 30% of consumers use Amazon' customer feedback before making shopping decisions. The implication for retail is that users prefer to rely on the experience of others before making a purchase and EAs are the first ones to rate your products online and establish the tonality of ratings that will come. What we call Early Adopter Amazon Algorithm (EAAA).

The EA are people that are passionate about new and interesting ideas and products. Their willingness to go the extra mile for a brand is an attribute that, if fostered, can have them adopt your brand and have others do the same. Creating a connection that hooks them, providing a vehicle with which they can express themselves, teasing them with something new and fostering a community are key elements to getting the EA on your side and bridging the gap to the rest of the market.

Amazon's Influence on Consumers Is Greater Than Google's

"Where did you begin the research for your most recent online purchase?"



Source: North American Technographics* Retail Online Survey, Q3 2009 (US)

* Source: North American Technographics* Retail Online Benchmark Recontact Survey, Q3 2011 (US)

Base: 3,333 US online adults

*Base: 2,827 US online adults

(multiple responses accepted)

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