



EMOJI AND MARKETING

What every brand should know about the form of communication that was created by the Japanese mobile phone operator NTT DoCoMo in the late 90s and which has spread throughout the world, platforms and conversations in the 2010s.

WHY EMOJI?

😊 = emoji
: = emoticon

Emoji is a part of communication today. It's THE language on Instagram, WhatsApp, FB Messenger, WeChat and the like. Statista's study shows that 35% of Americans used emoji or stickers daily in 2013. In Asia its even more popular: in Indonesia 46% of people use them daily.

Emoji usage goes in line with the rise of mobile messaging. Research company Ovum expects that the 27.5 trillion messages "transacted" on mobile messaging apps in 2013 will be increased to 71.5 trillion by the end of 2014.

Emoji emphasize your message. A Flinders University research found that people react to emoticons the same way as they do to a face. Another academic study finds that using them makes happy messages happier and sad messages sadder (Derks, Bos & von Grumbkov 2008).

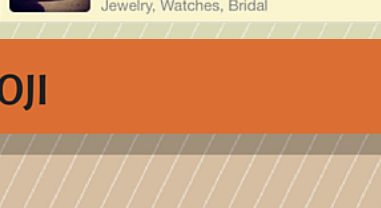
Emoji is expanding. The Unicode Consortium stated in June 2014 that approximately 250 new emoji will be added to the selection. For reasons unknown the hand with a raised index finger has gained the most media coverage of all the 250.

Emoji is going international. Oju Africa already revealed its own version of African emoji and the Unicode Consortium said in November 2014 that they will add 5 different skin tones for human emoji in 2015.

Emoji is coming to all platforms. As an attempt to spread emoji from mobile to other devices as well, Twitter announced in November 2014 that they will offer their set of desktop emoji as an open source library for everyone to use.

DID YOU KNOW?

You can even search the web in emoji!
Yelp introduced an emoji-based search on its platform in April 2014. Accurate? At times. A lot of fun? Most definitely.



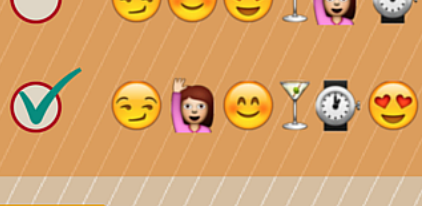
GETTING STARTED WITH EMOJI

1. Set the emoji keyboard on your smartphone.

2. Understand the basics.

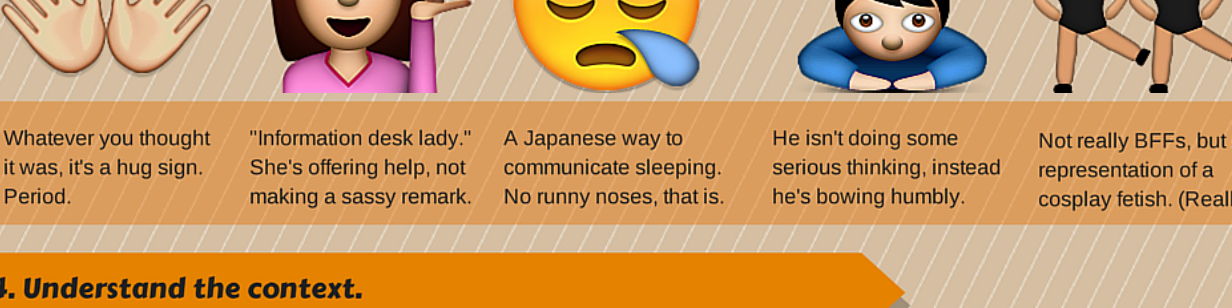
Computational linguist Tyler Schnoebelen of Stanford University found in his research that typically emoji are used to add to ideas, rather than to replace words.

His research also shows that when replacing words, long emoji-based messages unfold chronologically.



3. Understand the meanings.

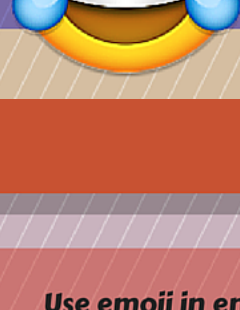
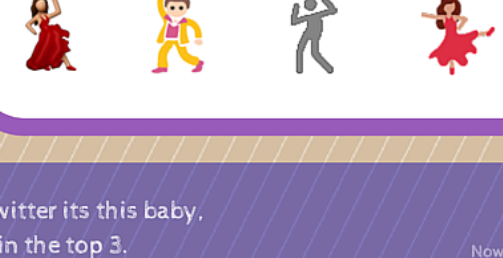
Emoji isn't always straightforward to interpret. These are among the most mistaken ones according to Mashable:



4. Understand the context.

Emoji don't always appear looking exactly the same, depending on the platform and device.

For example, the dancer may look quite different whether you view it on iOS, Android, Windows Phone or Twitter (from left to right, respectively).



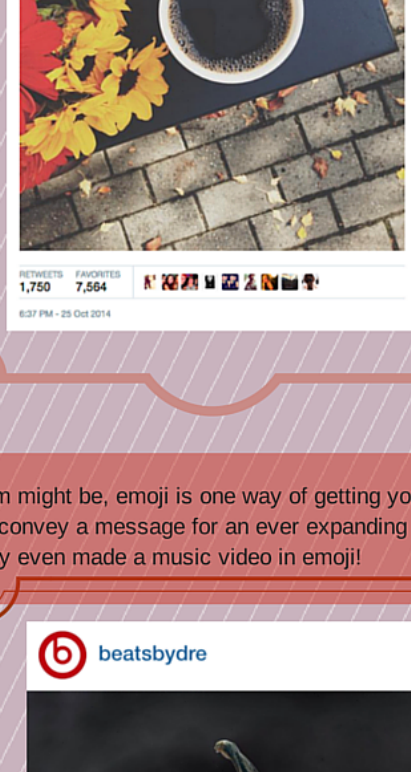
The most frequently used emoji? On Twitter its this baby, with two heart symbols right behind it in the top 3.

Now you know.

EXAMPLES OF EMOJI IN MARKETING

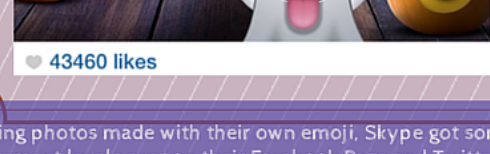
Use emoji in engagement and communications

Cleverly use emoji to punctuate and emphasize text-based updates in your social media channels. See how Starbucks have even matched the flowers in the picture with the ones on the emoji.



Use emoji in your marketing materials

Whatever your marketing medium might be, emoji is one way of getting your voice heard. Use it creatively to convey a message for an ever expanding emoji-speaking crowd. Katy Perry even made a music video in emoji!



Case Skype: posting photos made with their own emoji. Skype got some of the highest engagement levels ever on their Facebook Page and Twitter.

Use emoji as call-to-actions

PETA used emoji both as an emotional call-to-action and a creative way of communicating animal cruelty in their mobile-marketing campaign at the beginning of 2014. A heart emoji was all that was needed to take action.



The cruelty animals endure on factory farms is beyond words. Text ❤️ or HEART to 73522 to take action.



Use emoji as the core of branded apps

Built inside the Chinese social network WeChat, Oreo Bonding Emoji app allowed parents to take photos of themselves and their children and paste their heads into emojis, gathering an astonishing 99 M new emojis.



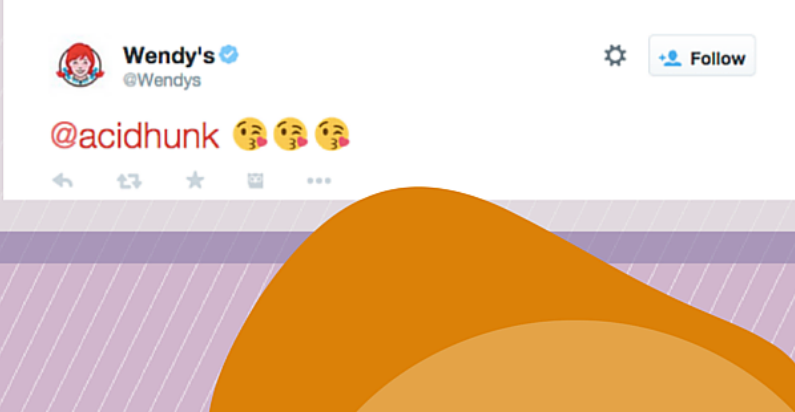
NOTE TO SELF: REMEMBER OFFLINE
Even thou 1.9 bn impressions were achieved online, the campaign created hype also on the streets of big cities, e.g. you could project the emoji on bus stands and remote-control them.

IMPLICATIONS FOR MARKETERS



LEARN THE BASICS NOW AND USE EMOJI WHEN YOUR CUSTOMERS DO

Start reactively, not proactively. Many brands use them only in replies to customers' messages.

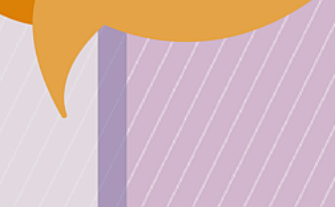


EMOJI GIVES AN OPPORTUNITY TO GET YOUR BRAND INSIDE CONVERSATIONS

Custom emoji and other visual symbols like branded stickers offer you a new way of getting into messages on IM platforms. And it's a big business, as well: The Japanese social IM service Line got 20% (70M \$) of their 2013 revenue from sticker purchases.



Even farsheid has his own set of emoji!



EMOJI IS UNIVERSAL

In an ever more global world, emoji offer a rare feat: universal language. Starting June 2015, it will be even more universally applicable, thanks to ethnic equality in people emoji.

Sources: <http://emojipedia.org/> // <http://ssc.sagepub.com/content/26/3/379.abstract> // <http://time.com/2993508/emoji-rules-tweets/> // <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/news/10628063/Human-brain-reacts-to-emoticons-as-real-faces.html> // <http://www.statista.com/statistics/301061/mobile-messaging-apps-sticker-emoji-usage/> // <http://www.wired.co.uk/news/archive/2014-03/28/racist-emojis> // <http://mashable.com/2014/08/15/surprising-emoji-meanings/> // <http://www.likeable.com/blog/2014/08/how-brands-can-communicate-through-emojis/> // <http://thenextweb.com/apps/2014/04/04/can-now-search-emoji-businesses-yelp/> // <http://www.mobilemarketer.com/cms/news/strategy/17910.html> // <http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-intersect/wp/2014/06/16/a-complete-ish-list-of-the-200-new-emoji-unicode-introduced-today/> // <http://1000heads.com/2014/07/point-of-view-the-inescapable-rise-of-emoji/> // <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e9SeUjWRFpk> // <http://www.forbes.com/sites/darmyolson/2014/05/27/rise-of-the-sticker-economy-99-cent-fire-breathing-cats-for-sale/> // <http://fashionista.com/2014/03/karl-lagerfeld-can-now-help-you-digitaly-express-your-feelings-with-branded-emojis> // <http://www.waterfall.com/blog/campaign-spotlight-peta-launches-emoji-increase-mobile-marketing-engagement/> // http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/04/09/emojis-yelp-for-when-words-are-not-enough_n_5119664.html