

## THE COMPANY YOU KEEP: USING SOCIAL VALIDATION IN MARKETING

When it comes to purchasing decisions, we want to fit in. It's innate. We inherently feel that an unwise choice is something that reflects badly on us, and could even threaten both our standing in a group and our own self-esteem. Two proverbial steps on Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs"<sup>1</sup> stumbled over in one fell swoop. Enter the concept of social validation.

In our desire to be part of and conform to the actions of a group — be it our neighbors or our peers at work — we feel comforted by having solid proof that others before us have made the same decision we're faced with and are happy with the results. Our ever-increasing immersion in the "virtual" world, where the "man behind the curtain" may turn out to be every bit as ordinary and fallible as Oz himself, only serves to amplify this desire.

It's not enough for a brand to extol its own virtues. We want corroboration. Positive reviews bolster our confidence, provided they come from those we perceive to have sound judgment. People like us.

When positive testimonials are stacked on top of each other, as in the case **of this video Hawthorne Direct produced for Home Advisor**, the effect is magnified. With brisk cadence, one bit of praise from people we'd be happy to have as neighbors follows another, giving the viewer the impression that there's much more where that came from.

"They chose as we're about to, and they're happy about it. So too will we," we think to ourselves.

We'd love to show you how the use of social validation and other powerful neuroscience principles can help build your brand and increase your ROI. Just fill out the form to the right and we'll contact you.

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<sup>1</sup> A.H. Maslow, *A Theory of Human Motivation* (1943)