

WORK WITH THE READING

Read the article and gather information about why something becomes popular.

Unusual Ideas to Make a Buzz

- 1 Every year companies spend millions of dollars on advertising to create buzz about their products—in other words, to get people talking about them. Companies know that people like to talk about unusual, funny, and remarkable things. Nowadays, companies are using many creative ways to help products become more popular.
- 2 One idea that can **contribute** to popularity is to do something very unusual. Red Bull™ is a company that makes energy drinks. They want people to feel energetic when they think about Red Bull™. So they sponsored an unusual event: 43-year-old Felix Baumgartner jumped from 39 kilometers up in space to set a



Felix Baumgartner sky-diving from space

new world record for skydiving. He traveled more than 1,300 kilometers per hour in a space suit with Red Bull™'s name on it. This is part of a new **trend** in advertising, in which companies pay for unusual events, hoping that customers will talk more about their products.

- 3 Some other companies choose to do something surprising so that people will remember their product and **spread** their idea. A good example is a company called Blendtec™. Tom Dickson, Blendtec™'s owner, had an idea to make his blenders look more interesting. He made videos showing his blenders mixing up unusual things. He put items like smartphones, rakes, or sports equipment into one of the machines and asked, "Will it blend?" People were surprised to see a blender cut a smartphone into small pieces. Everyone talked about the videos and wanted to **find out** more about the blenders. Dickson was invited to demonstrate his products on TV shows. His blenders became much more popular, and he sold a lot more of them.

- 4 The company that makes Doritos™, a snack food, had a different idea about creating buzz. They decided to get their customers involved. So they began a competition. They asked customers to make their own TV ads. Then, they asked viewers to choose the ads that they liked the best. This created buzz because people like to participate and **express** their own opinions.



a rake in a Blendtec™ blender

- 5 Another way to make a product popular is to **connect** it in people's minds with something that they see often. To improve sales, the maker of Kit Kat™ chocolate bars used advertisements that connected Kit Kat™ bars with coffee. They hoped that every time people drank coffee, they would think of Kit Kat™ bars. They were right. Sales improved by more than 50 percent when people connected Kit Kat™ bars with coffee.
- 6 There are many ways that advertisers hope to make their products become popular: doing something surprising or exciting, asking customers to get involved, or connecting the product with something that people see regularly. Whatever method is used, the result is **clear**: more buzz and more popularity.

Match each product to the type of advertising used for it.

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| ___ 1. Red Bull™ | a. asked customers to make TV ads |
| ___ 2. Blendtec™ | b. connected the product with coffee |
| ___ 3. Doritos™ | c. used a skydiver |
| ___ 4. Kit Kat™ bars | d. used their product to cut things to pieces |

Write the correct paragraph number next to each idea from the reading.
Then underline the sentence where you found the answer.

- ___ a. People like to participate and express their own opinions.
- ___ b. Sometimes companies do surprising things to get people talking about a product.
- ___ c. Advertisers try to create a buzz about their products.
- ___ d. There are many ways that advertisers try to make their products popular.
- ___ e. Some companies like to hold unusual events.
- ___ f. When people are surprised, they may talk about what they have seen.

People were surprised.

People like to participate and express their own opinions.

People feel energetic when they think about it.

People connected it bars with coffee.

Complete each statement. Why did people talk about these products?

1. People talked about Red Bull™ because _____.
2. People talked about Blendtec™ because _____.
3. People thought about Doritos™ because _____.
4. People thought about Kit Kat™ because _____.

