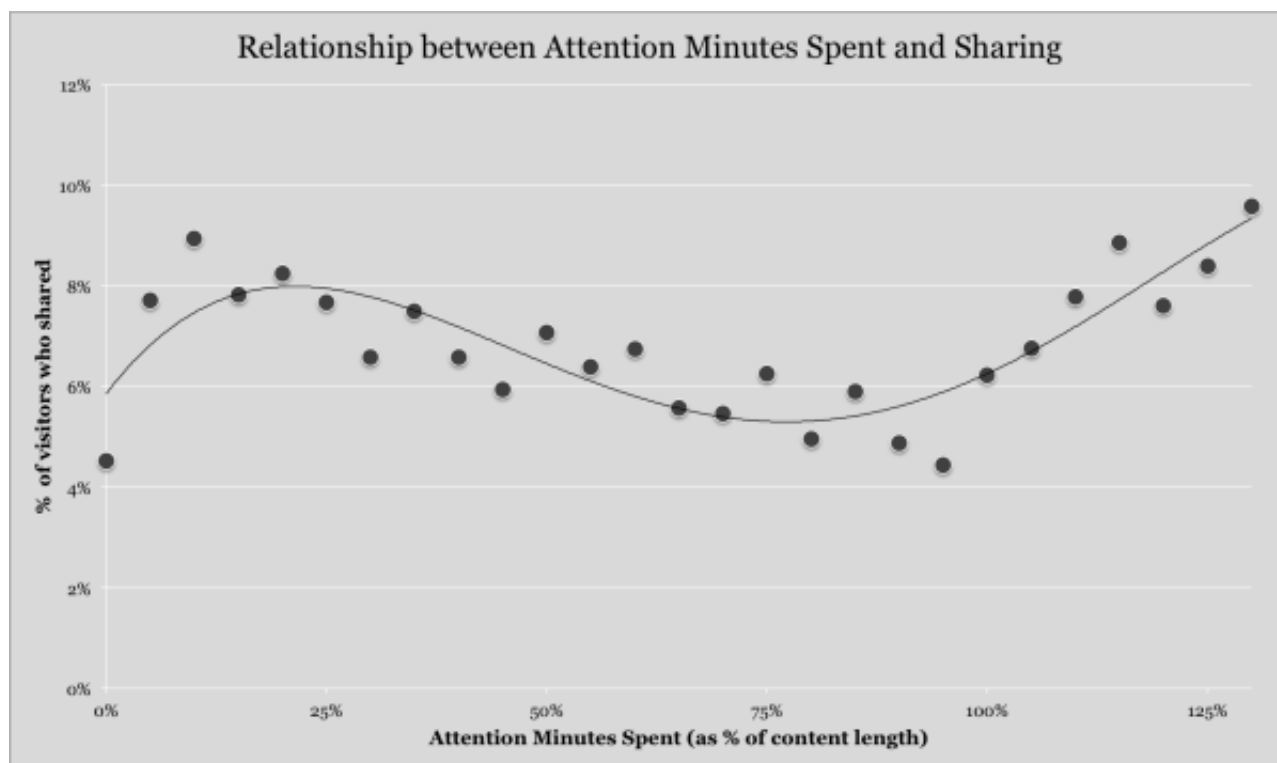


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The Less You Read, The More You Share?

Feb 17, 2014 at 8:59am ET by [Greg Finn](#)

As users continue to share more and more content, a lingering question remains — how much of it is fully read and vetted? According to the popular, feel-good website [Upworthy](#), the answer is not much. Upworthy has come onto the scene in the last year with positive stories and uplifting news. They've recently announced a new metric called "[attention minutes](#)." The goal is to find attention not only by site time, but also per article. According to the data, folks who spent 25% of the average attention minutes on an article actually shared it more than those who spent 100% of the average attention minutes on the article.



Earlier this month, Tony Haile, CEO of Chartbeat, which measures real-time traffic and sharing data corroborated this stat in the following statement:

 **Jeff Jarvis** @jeffjarvis 02 Feb
 @shafqatislam @zseward @felixsalmon That's what @arctictory has found.

 **Tony Haile** @arctictory Follow
 @jeffjarvis @shafqatislam @zseward @felixsalmon We've found effectively no correlation between social shares and people actually reading
 10:01 AM - 2 Feb 2014
 72 RETWEETS 75 FAVORITES

Upworthy’s data shows that users who find an article don’t necessarily need to view it in its entirety to share. Maybe they’ve already seen the article previously. Maybe Upworthy has a strong enough reputation that they know it will “end well.” Maybe users are sharing based off of the site’s reputation alone. The simple fact is that higher share percentages occurred from those who viewed a 5%-25% of overall attention minutes than those who spent 100% attention minutes on the nose.


Conversely, those users that stuck around more than the average (in attention minutes) actually shared higher than the initial burst. Once a user stuck around for 125% of the avg. attention minutes they share at just under a 10% clip. This makes sense as they likely watched/read all content and made the share instead of simply arriving, reading a headline and sharing.

As marketers, this data is important so that we can help spur sharing both above, below and throughout the main article content — not just at the conclusion of a piece. It should be noted that Upworthy is a unique example as they feature content that is intrinsically positive and shareable and also have not created their own unique content. The fact that folks may have seen content previously and that they are biased (towards the positive) should be taken into account.


For more information on this topic see [Upworthy’s Post](#) or [The Verge](#).

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