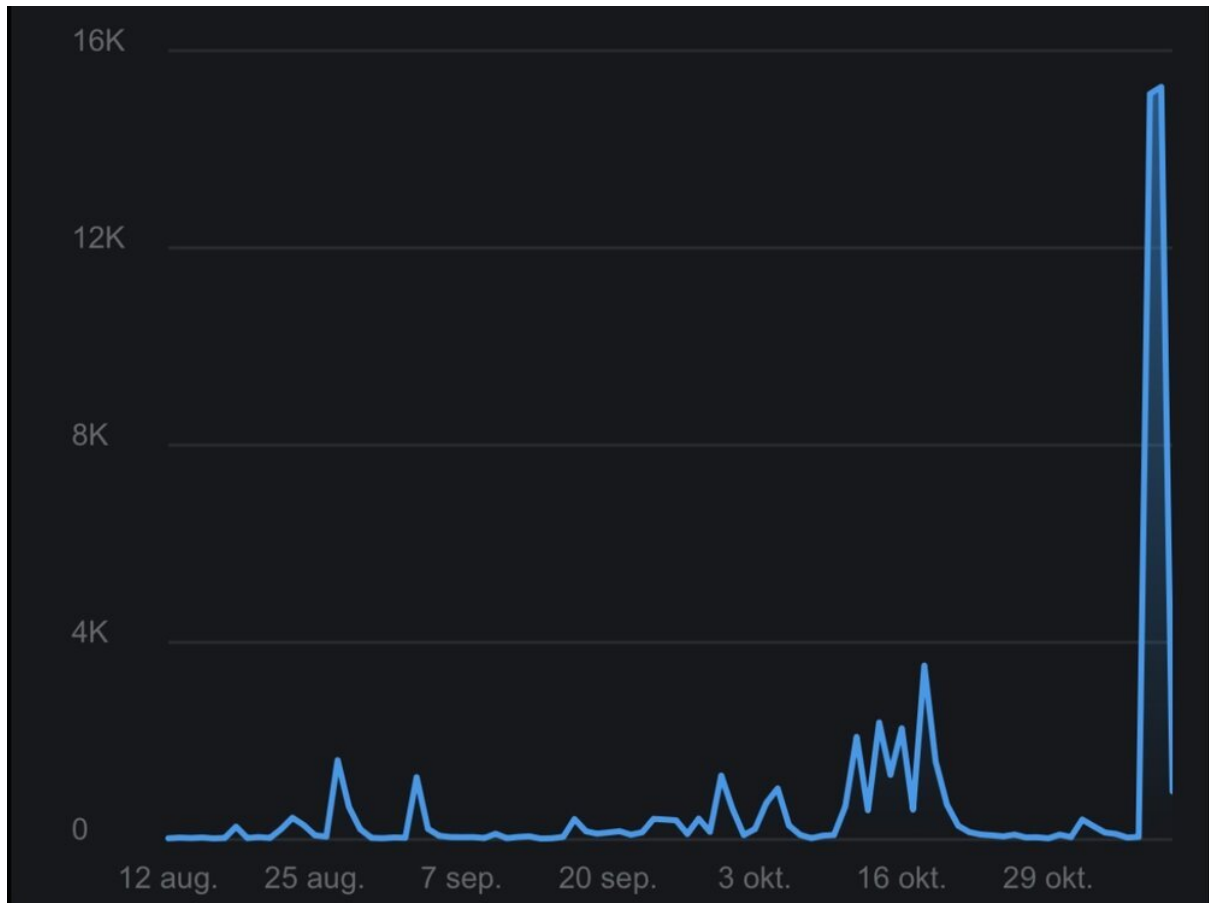# Go Viral on X

32K views in two days

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Earlier this week one of my posts on the social network X went viral and attracted **32K views in two days**. With no major presence on Elon Musk's platform, and no paid advertising, gaining that kind of attention is something special. Let me explain how this happened.

The Post

If you have been following my blog, you may know that I enjoy my Apple Vision Pro. The device attracts a lot of attention, a lot of people wonder what the device could do if it was given more software capabilities.

My Apple Vision Pro

This week, Apple's newest Mac Mini became available in stores. It is a super powerful computer that is unbelievably small. Apple's marketing department made handy use of the 'cuteness factor' in their advertisement. Make no mistake, this small computer is a powerhouse that can be configured with up to 128GB RAM, 40 CPU cores and a whopping 8TB in super fast flash storage.

Mac Mini

My post involved combining these two bits into one single post. With a well chosen visual, it could be something that would speak for itself. I figured to combine two pieces

of Apple artwork into a single image, combine it with a simple tag line and post it on X:
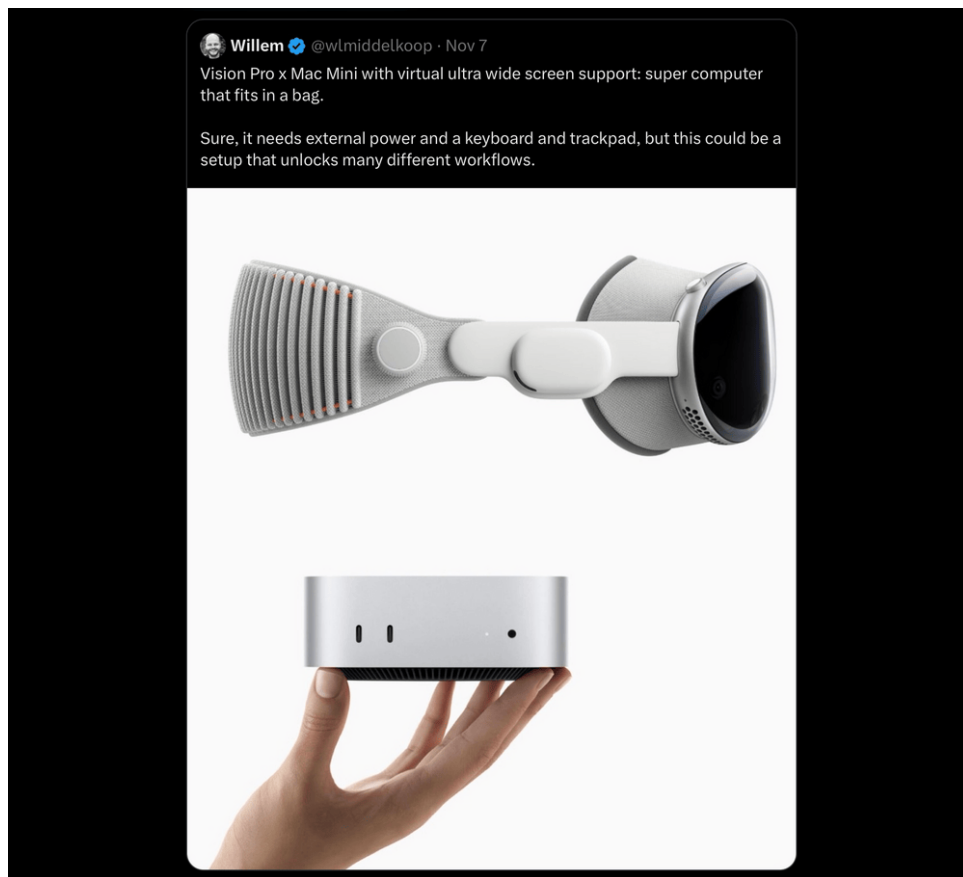
My Post on X: Mac Mini x Vision Pro

One thing that came in handy is that I have trained myself to be able to produce content right from my smartphone. I do not need a computer for Photoshop or Microsoft Word. This enables me to act right away when an idea strikes. On my iPhone I used Pixelmator to stitch the two images together:
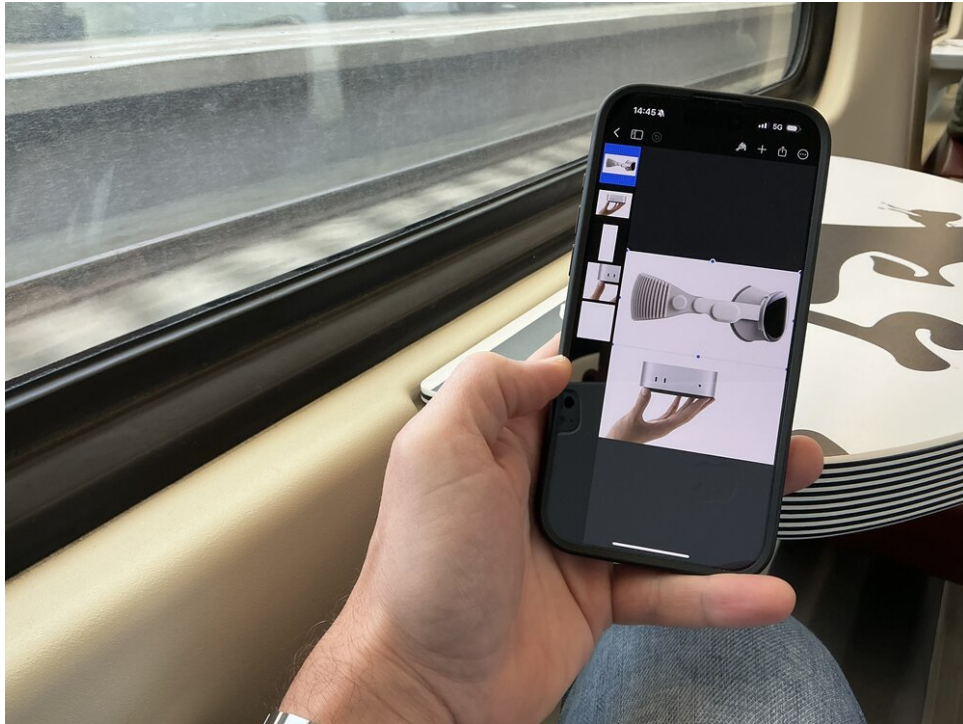
Image Editing on the go: Pixelmator on iPhone

Attracting attention

Posting something on X is one thing, having it discovered and seen by others is something else. The platform uses algorithms to determine what posts will be shown to who. If a posts gets liked by real, verified, folks, the algorithm takes this as a signal that the content is *good*. Then it continues to scale the post, collect more feedback in terms of likes and reposts, to further grow its status as viral post.

The hardest part is to get exactly those folks to like your post causing the algorithm to start its scaling. Your post needs a proverbial push to gain initial momentum, once up to speed it can continue to accelerate by itself. It is like a snowball starting to roll from a mountain, potentially causing an avalanche.

For this post I knew that there are a few high profile people on X that actively post about Apple Vision Pro. I figured that if they would see my post, chances were that one or two of them would like it or repost it. Using X's search function, I found the most popular posts on Vision Pro and manually noted the handles (e.g. @wlmiddelkoop) of the authors.

Then I constructed a second post, wrapping my original post, with an even simpler tag line followed by all the authors. This causes the authors to receive an alert that someone mentioned them. Not everybody will act upon it, but given a relevant post on a subject of interest, chances are folks will engage with it. And so it happened! Within just a few minutes, I received my first reactions from one of the authors I mentioned in the post.

Post wrapping my original X-post, with a simpler tag line, mentioning authors that I manually selected to have posted on the subject of my post

When the post attracted two more interactions from some verified accounts, the algorithm began to push the post to more and more people's timelines. Leading to thousands of views in mere hours.
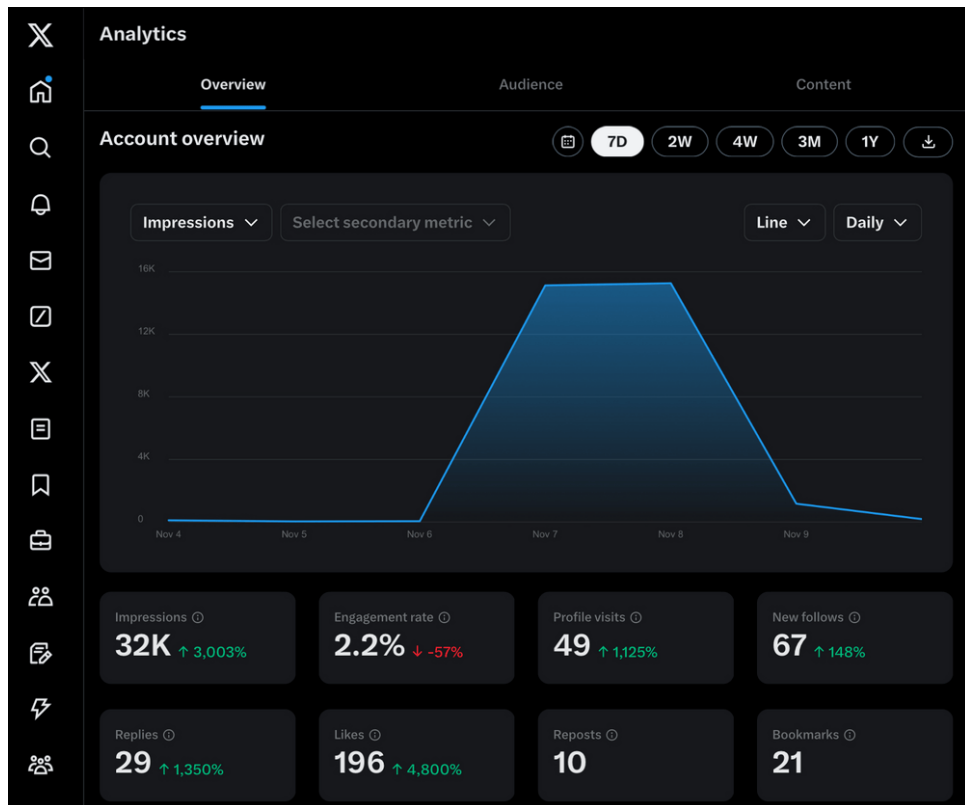
32K views in two days

One could wonder how reproducible this virality really is. Was it a coincidence? Did I play the system here, or did it work because it is actually *supposed to work*? When you think about it, it makes kind of sense that content that is actually liked by real people is shown more. The X-platform, like all other social media networks, optimises for engagement: *good content* is its fuel.

Takeaways

If your considering posting on social media yourself, I think it is a good idea to keep these things in mind:

- **Act aptly**: Have an idea? Just post it! If you think of something that triggers your imagination, chances are more people will feel the same. Do it on the go. Share it and find out.
- **Visuals**: Think about 'glance-ability', an image can say more than a lot of words. Create and combine things.
- **Help discoverability**: Choose words that match your subject, be specific to help the algorithm determine what your post is about. If you were searching for your own post, what keywords or search phrases would you use?
- **Connect with audience**: Select 5-10 authors that may genuinely be interested in your post. Don't annoy people, but try to deliver value by reaching out. Would you appreciate it if someone else was reaching out with *that* post to you? Make it so!
- **Leverage momentum**: Popular topics are popular for a reason, post related content or reply to existing posts to benefit from existing trends.

Conclusion

Social media is no rocket* science, think of it as a computerised exchange of ideas. Have your idea reach people that think of similar things and your post can gain a lot of attention. Just imagine that *you* are the person you're trying to reach - if you would engage with your own content, others will likely do, too!

    * despite being owned by the same guy as SpaceX, ha!