



Figure 3: Totally Worth It banner ad

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The campaign **reaches online gamers** through partnerships with the makers of Final Fantasy and Guild Wars 2. To raise awareness about how friends can help and support one another through hard times, Guild Wars 2's 11 million players each received a free "Seize the Awkward" t-shirt for their in-game character during a month-long promotion in 2020 (The Drum, 2020).

Project Evaluation

A study by Ipsos Public Affairs showed that, as of March 2020, those who were aware of the Seize the Awkward campaign were **significantly more likely to have taken key actions** compared to those who are not aware of the campaign. Reported actions included:

- **76% talked to a friend** about their mental health (vs. 65%).
- **49% visited a website** to get more information about how to support a friend (vs. 30%)
- **29% called or texted a hotline** to get more information about how to support a friend with their mental health (vs. 15%)

A brand study was conducted by Perksy simultaneously, showing a **significant increase** in website traffic, brand awareness and logo recognition (ARF, 2020).

Partner Llama Lead Gen reported that leveraging YouTube and Meta ads, campaign results included:

- **55M impressions**
- **3M video views**
- **106K clicks**
- **67%** of the clicks from Facebook/Instagram ads converted into a landing page view on the campaign website (Llama Lead Gen, n.d.).

Since it launched in 2018, the campaign has continued to use research and data analysis to optimize their messaging. In 2021, they teamed up with Dentsu's Attention Lab and VidMob to analyze the campaign using artificial intelligence and data science. Creative

assets were analyzed with machine learning to identify the key visual elements that resonated most with audiences. Insights were implemented, and the optimized assets drove increased engagement across all three platforms. (dentsu, 2021). Results included:

- Instagram: **21% increase** in Page Engagement Rate.
- Snapchat: Swipe Rates more than doubled from the 2020 media flight with a **120% increase**.
- TikTok: **112% increase** in Click Through Rate.

Assessment of Theoretical Application

The Seize the Awkward campaign addresses the key insight that **while nobody likes an awkward silence, taking advantage of the awkward moment can really help those struggling with their mental health**. The goal of the campaign is to encourage teens and young adults to embrace awkward moments and use them as an opportunity to reach out to a friend and start a conversation about how they're feeling.

Social Integration Theory

French sociologist Émile Durkheim theorized in his 1897 book "Suicide: a study in sociology," that **the more socially connected people are, the less likely they are to commit suicide** (Durkheim, 1951). This social theory became known as "social integration," with the idea being that as social integration decreases, the likelihood of suicide increases.

The campaign's goal is to reduce suicide rates among young people by **deepening their social connections**. I believe that the Seize the Awkward campaign's strategy and messaging were built on a foundation of Durkheim's social integration theory and his theory of suicide.

The campaign's research and performance data suggests that **proactive support from friends** is one of the most successful ways to help youth and young adults who are at risk of dying by suicide (ARF, 2020).

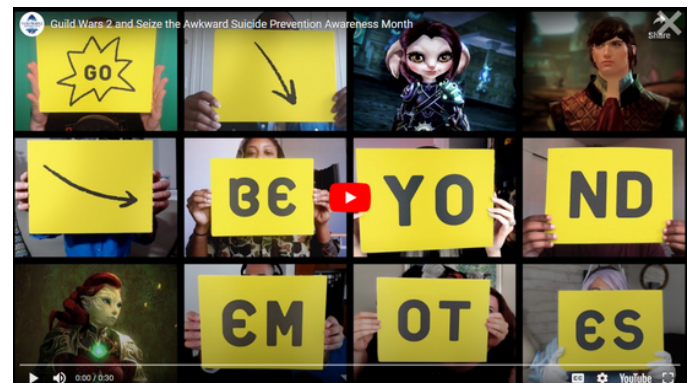


Figure 4: Screenshot of Guild Wars 2 [Seize the Awkward video](#).