

The meme that took a bite out of Apple

 By Louise Marsland 15 Sep 2014

Have you heard the one about 'scarf guy'? Or were you too busy posting some of the 1,400 tweets per hour at the start of the [#OscarTrial](#) judgment, Thursday?

One of the biggest talking points this past week was the '[Apple scarf guy](#)' - a hapless Apple developer and supplier with an unfortunate fashion sense. He wore what we in South Africa call a 'snood' (dreadful word, sounds rather rude). It's also a pretty awful fashion accessory as accessories go, but he wore his 'infinity scarf' as the Americans call it, in a rather obscure shade of purple too.



Photo via [Buzzfeed](#)

Clearly the Apple presentation wasn't as riveting as expected, plus technical problems with the live feed meant users were scouting around for other things to focus on. The Apple watch certainly wasn't the futuristic, tech-forward, deal-breaker everyone expected it to be and as attention wandered, scarf guy was there to provide the Twitterati and anyone who thinks they are funny (pretty much everyone on Twitter), with target practice.

Comments ranged from: "I am dressing up as scarf guy for Halloween"; to "Live stream failed, guy wore a huge scarf and the new iPhone is what Galaxy and Samsung had for years. What's the attraction? [#iPhone6](#)". And of course there were multiple parody accounts within moments: @KeynoteScarf and @purpleScarfGuy, to name a couple. The way things play out today, Apple scarf guy might get a sponsored fashion makeover, a menswear contract, his own reality TV show.

The UK's [Telegraph](#) newspaper ran with a headline, 'Apple launch: who is scarf guy', writing that he stole the show. And then have his profile, which as the founder of a gaming company, probably won't hurt - for his company, Apple not so much. Some of the tweets linked his questionable style with Apple's latest product line: "[#ScarfGuy](#) from today's [#iPhone6](#) launch exemplify (sic) how unfashionable Apple products have become"; and "The first coverage I've read about today's Apple unveiling centres around a guy called: [#ScarfGuy](#)".

If you were Apple's PR and marketing department or agency or social media community manager, how would you have responded?



There's plenty of fodder here for opposing brands too... Mike's Hard Lemonade, a 'premium malt beverage' @mhl tweeted pic soon after with this tweet: "Really digging [#scarfguy](#)'s style. [#AppleLive](#) [#GreatMinds](#)". I would have liked to have seen something clever from Samsung too, which instead focused on the technical differences and glitches in a mild series of [YouTube ads after the Apple launch](#).

The point of all this for brands is that you don't know when something off camera, offside, off cue will strike, or will appeal the social media masses. Or will overshadow your presentation, press conference, your message. Be prepared for anything and everything.

ABOUT LOUISE MARSLAND

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