



The  
science of  
**ENGAGEMENT**

# Spending on content-led marketing continues to soar...

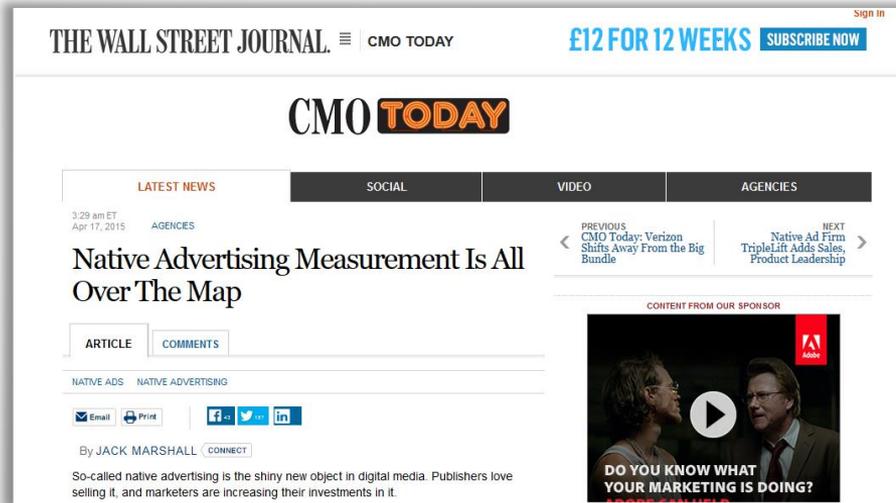


\*Content Marketing Association

\*\*US Content Marketing Institute 2015 'Benchmarks, Budgets and Spends'

\*\*\*BI Intelligence 2015

# But a measurement gap means we aren't making the most of it



*'Measuring the effectiveness of content-led marketing is a challenge'*

US 51%

Australia 44%

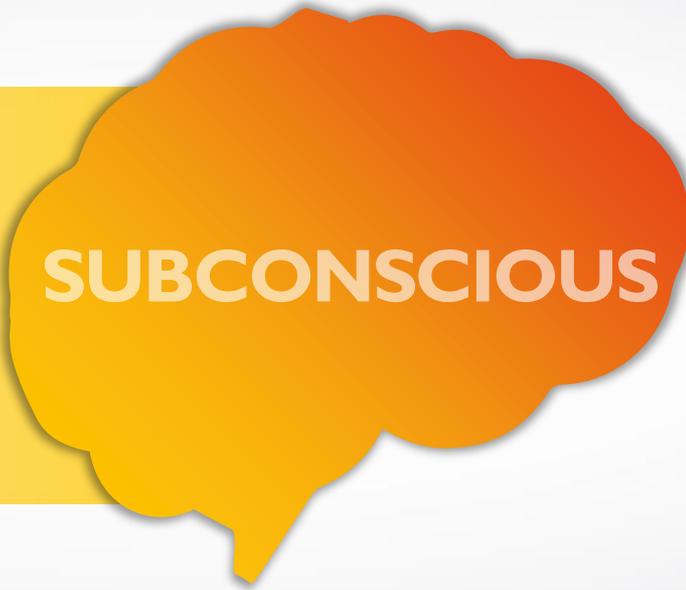
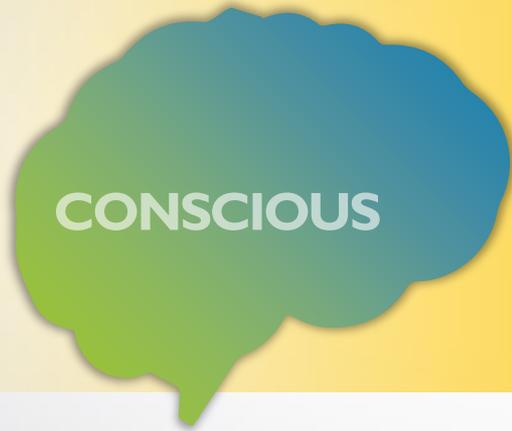
So we need to understand  
the full  
story...





How do consumers engage with content-led marketing?  
What does this engagement mean for the brands involved?

# Here's the challenge



# Which means we need to unlock the unconscious mind



# Our approach

Digital consumers  
of English language  
international  
news 16+



Six markets -  
Australia, Hong  
Kong, Singapore,  
US, Canada and  
Germany



Research was  
conducted  
online in  
October  
2015



Quantitative  
survey +  
Facial coding  
+ Implicit  
Response  
Testing



5,153 respondents



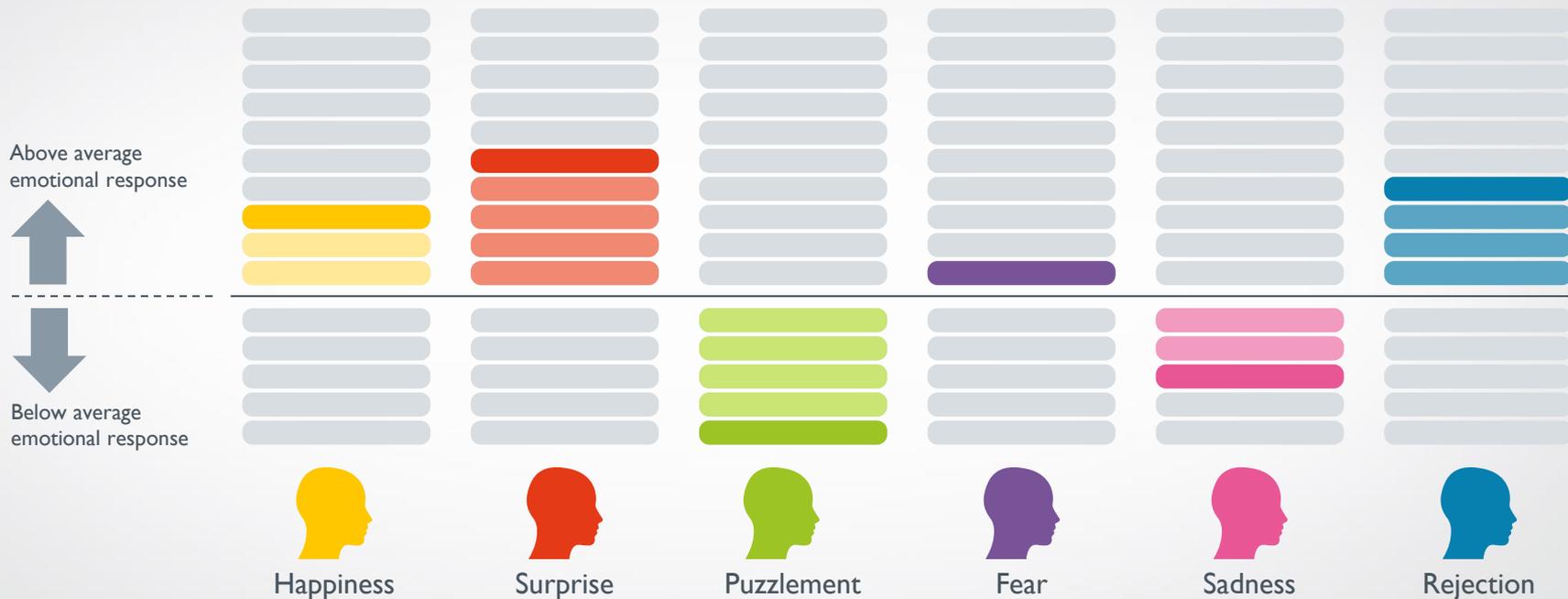
Test and control approach



# How facial coding works



# Understanding the emotional response



# The expert panel providing the context



20  
experts  
from the media



Media agencies  
and academia



Rate the content for  
presence of key  
factors, merged with  
emotional response

EMPATHY FUN AND EASY GOING NOVELTY DRAMA CREATIVITY VISUAL TENSION SIMPLICITY



# The main headlines

Heightened  
engagement  
where brand  
involvement is fully  
transparent

Properly executed,  
content-led  
marketing is  
**trusted and  
persuasive**

A powerful  
**emotional  
impact** on the  
brands

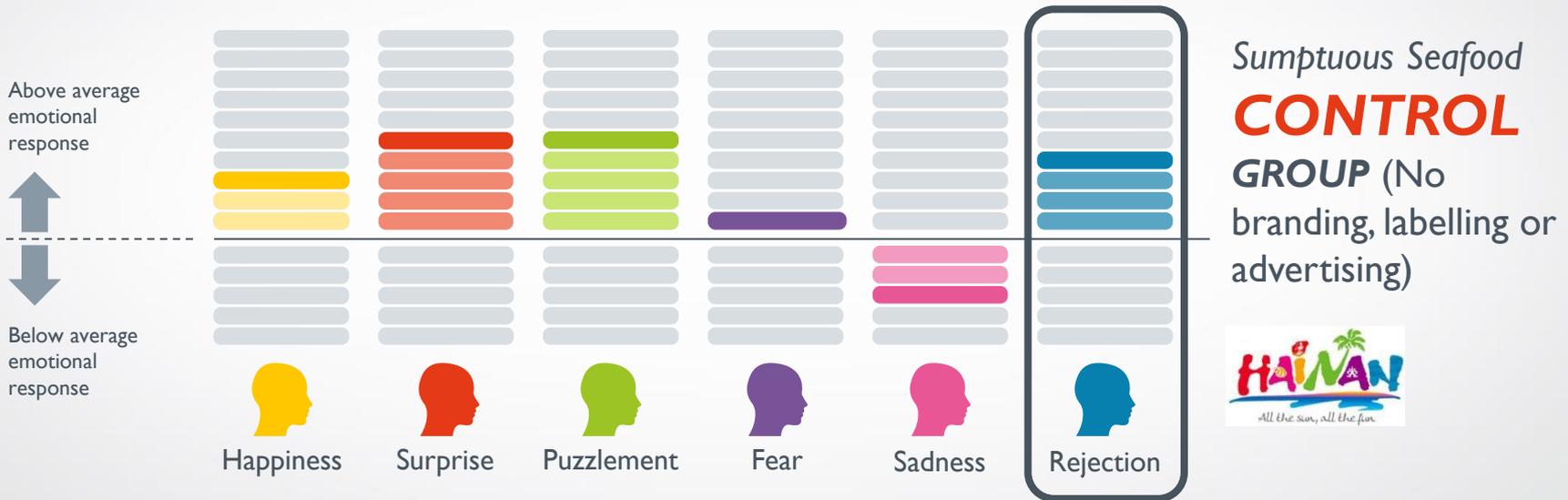
Referencing  
the brand  
within the  
narrative works  
harder for the  
advertiser



# 1

Heightened engagement where  
brand involvement is **fully**  
**transparent**

# Higher levels of rejection when there's no brand transparency



# Heightened engagement and increased receptivity when brand involvement is clear



# Heightened engagement and increased receptivity when brand involvement is clear



# Transparency is absolutely vital

2/3 are...



Happy to read as long as it's clear which advertiser/brand it is presented by



Happy to read as long as it's clearly labelled



# 2

Properly executed, content-led marketing  
is **trusted and persuasive**

# People are receptive to good quality content



63%

I'm happy to see as long as it is the same standard/quality as the provider's editorial content

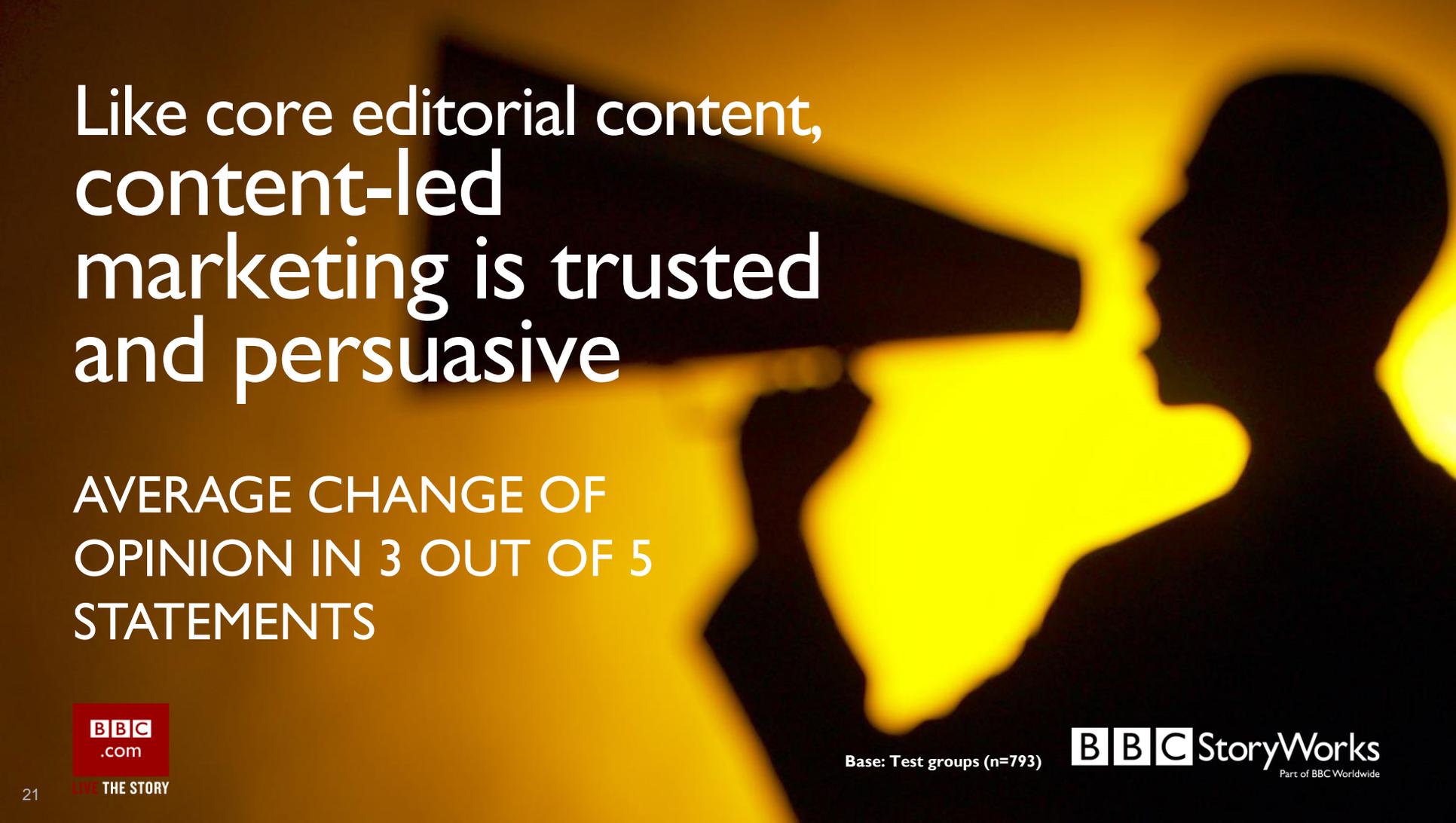
59%  
informative

57%  
would share

55%  
interesting

54%  
complements  
editorial content

NET AGREE %



# Like core editorial content, content-led marketing is trusted and persuasive

AVERAGE CHANGE OF  
OPINION IN 3 OUT OF 5  
STATEMENTS

And they are much more trusting of this content  
when on **premium providers**



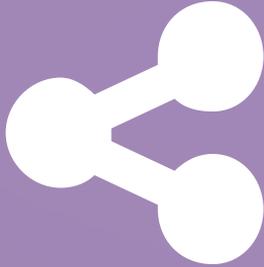
**+30%**

more **informative and accurate** than on non-premium  
news providers

# Receptivity will become almost universal over time

80%

would share content



80%

plays a complementary role to editorial content



79%

informative and interesting



High awareness = greater receptivity

# But expectations around transparency will be even greater

## Eight in ten are...

Happy to read as long as it's clear which advertiser brand it is presented by

★ Happy to see as long as it is the same standard/quality as the provider's editorial content



Happy to read as long as it's clearly labelled

Read an average of 4.1 pieces of content-led marketing last month



# 3

A powerful emotional impact on  
the brands



**2/3** agree  
innovative way to reach audiences



*“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”*

MAYA ANGELOU

Author, poet & civil rights activist

# Content-led marketing shifts entrenched implicit opinions of brands...



+14%

increase in implicit positivity

% uplift between pre and post exposure

# It also increases positivity of brands on an explicit level



Base: Test groups (n=793),  
Control groups (n=794)

**BBC** StoryWorks  
Part of BBC Worldwide

# enhances brand perceptions



Significant uplift for **HIGH QUALITY** and **DISTINCTIVE**

% UPLIFT BETWEEN TEST AND CONTROL

# ...and drives brand amplification and consideration

+14%

recommendation

+16%

consideration

% UPLIFT BETWEEN TEST AND CONTROL



# 4

Integrating the brand within the narrative  
works much harder for the advertiser

# Heightened emotional engagement



Base: Exposed to integrated content (n=528)

# Drives implicit and explicit brand positivity

IMPLICIT

Integrated

+32%

EXPLICIT

Not integrated

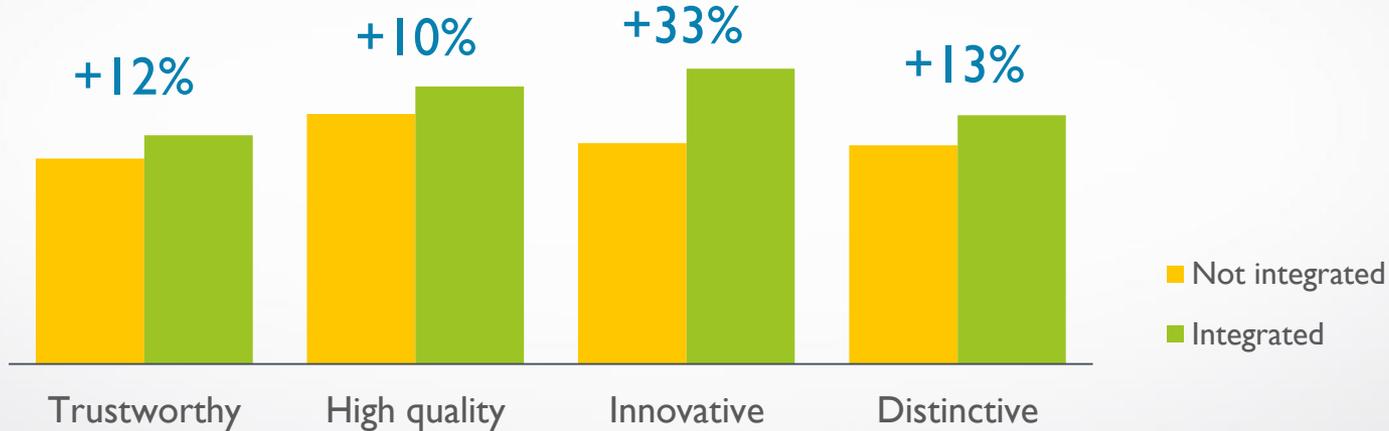
+17%

Integrated

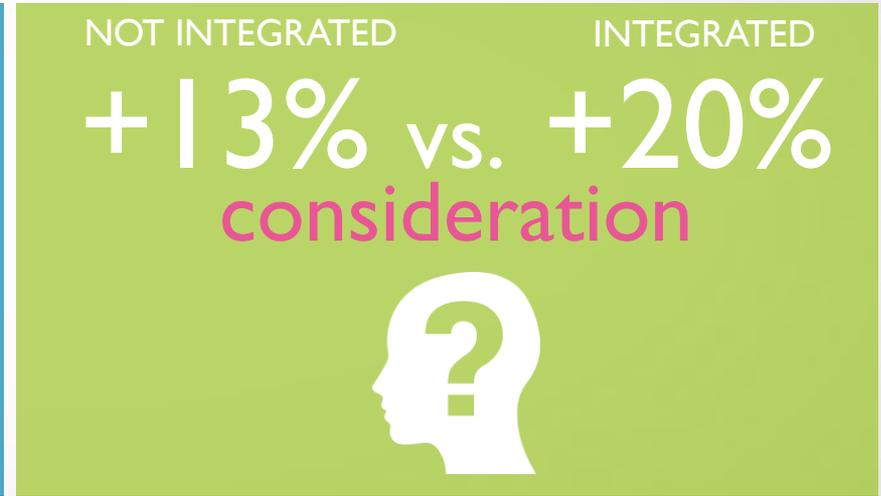
+109%

% UPLIFT PRE TO POST EXPOSURE

# And further enhances brand image



# And call to action measures



% UPLIFT BETWEEN TEST AND CONTROL

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# Key content-led marketing guidelines



Be transparent and educate your users



Match the editorial quality



Be clear what your content is trying to achieve and how the emotional engagement can support that



Integrating the brand within the narrative and supporting with traditional forms of advertising will work harder for the brand



Placing in a premium environment will give your content credibility and allow it to flourish