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## INTERACTIVE MUSIC VIDEO GETS VIEWERS TALKING ABOUT DEPRESSION

  SPORT & FITNESS

**"Replace the Face" brings viewers together to watch an evocative music video — and provides a space to talk about it afterwards.**

There are over 350 million people living with depression, but the very nature of the illness can often make sufferers feel isolated and alone. While helplines such as Samaritans have long offered invaluable support to those in need, we have recently seen organizations capitalizing on the anonymity that the internet can offer, to engage people in discussion about difficult subjects.

Launched last week, on “Blue Monday”, **Replace the Face** is an interactive music video which brings viewers together to watch an evocative short film simultaneously. It assigns each viewer a character — one male and one female — and encourages them to discuss the topics of depression and suicide tackled in the video via a message board afterwards.

The mini-site is a collaborative project between Australian dream pop band Lowlakes and Amsterdam based creative agency **Spektor**, who believe that the music video, now predominantly viewed on the internet, can be used to create communal experiences which encourage discussion and communication. Last year, the most viewed music video — Katy Perry’s “Dark Horse” — had over 700 million views and Spektor think the popularity, as well as immediacy and brevity, of the format, make it an excellent vehicle for positive social change.

The hope is that the experiment will demonstrate to other companies, non-profits and healthcare workers that the music video is an excellent platform for engaging a target audience and conveying difficult subject matter in a provocative and interesting way. How can the format be used in other ways to help it evolve into something more than just entertainment?

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