

# A Belgian Charity's Mannequin Challenge Video Calls Attention To The Struggles Of ALS

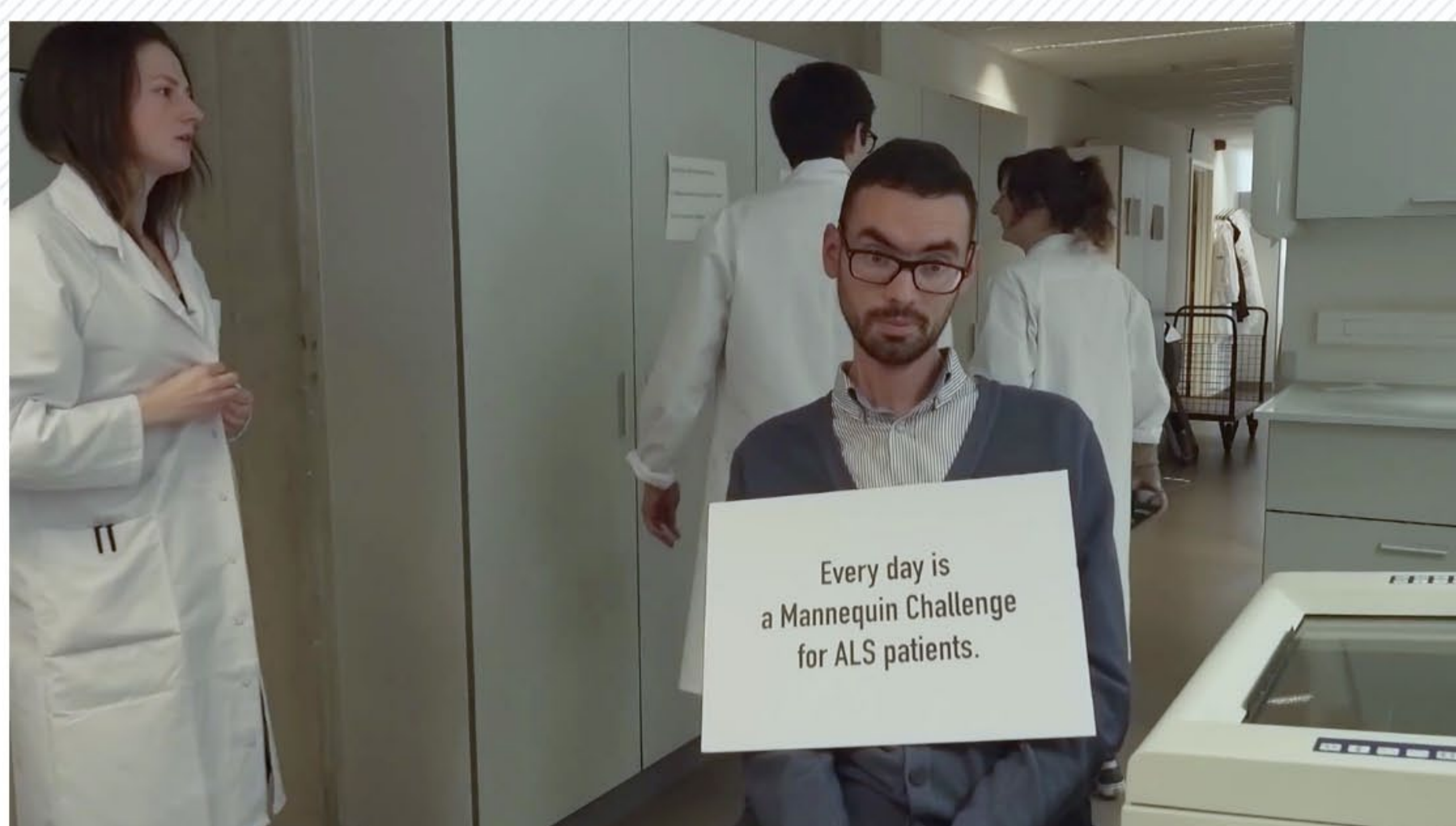
How to take a viral gag and say something with it.



DAN SOLOMON | 11.29.16 | 2:40 PM

**WHAT:** A mannequin challenge video from a Belgian ALS nonprofit.

**WHO:** Belgium's ALS Liga.



**WHY WE CARE:** The elements of a good Mannequin Challenge video are pretty standard at this point: "Black Beatles" by Rae Sremmurd, people in an interesting environment holding very still, a camera that moves around to look like a scene from a '10s-era Bryan Singer *X-Men* movie. But while the format is well-developed, and the fact that this big viral meme is just for fun—meaning that there's very little activism behind it—is cool (sometimes people can just do creative things for the sake of being creative!), that doesn't mean that there isn't room to innovate. That's what ALS Liga did in their video, which is mostly just a good Mannequin Challenge—we tour a research lab full of folks in white coats, beakers of whatever substance is having a reaction go off, for some reason a scientist is on the floor, etc.—but which lands on a heavy conclusion as an ALS patient sits, also unmoving, carrying a sign that reads "every day is a Mannequin Challenge for ALS patients." The sobering reminder of a condition that attacks the nervous system and a person's motor skills isn't intended to shame people for their enjoyment of the meme—but it is an effective way to tap into the viral nature of the challenge to make a point about something that deserves our thought and attention.

