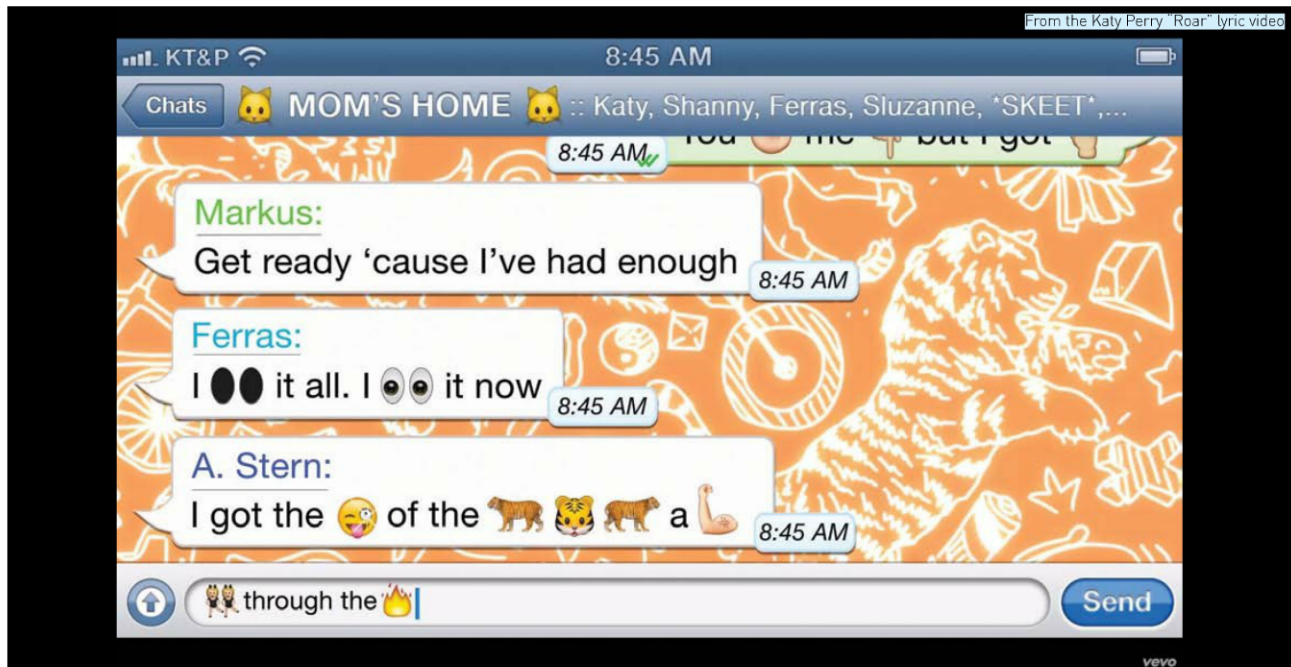


# Evolution in Emoji

MOBILE MESSAGING FOR KATY PERRY'S "ROAR" LYRIC VIDEO

by JENNIFER WOLFE



Pop queen Katy Perry went digital for the launch of her recent hit, “Roar,” the first single from her forthcoming album *Prism*. Perry and label Capitol Records released an SMS-inspired lyric video for “Roar” that features mobile messaging service WhatsApp and ping-pong style conversations created from a mix of text and emoji.

For those who haven’t already installed the popular keyboard pictographs on their smartphones, emoji, originally developed in the late 1990s by Japanese mobile carrier NTT DoCoMo, are sets of 12 x 12-pixel characters that attempt to encompass the entire breadth of human emotion. They’ve seen increasing adoption in the West, with Apple rolling them into its iOS 5.0 update in late 2011, and earlier this year the Library of Congress added Fred Benenson’s *Emoji Dick*, an emoji-fied version of the Herman Melville classic, to its collection.

The “Roar” lyric video, created by Joe Humpay, Aya Tanimura, Tim Zimmer and Tuan Le for Capitol Records, is centered almost entirely on the screen of Perry’s white iPhone, which the recording artist uses to participate in a group chat with her friends while completing such prosaic tasks as using the toilet, eating breakfast and taking a bath.

“The new thing is the hybrid lyric video, which blends live-action footage with motion graphics,” says Humpay, an editor and motion graphics artist who got his start more than four years ago by creating lyric videos in his spare time and posting them online onto sites such as Vimeo. “The Justin Timberlake ‘Suit & Tie’ lyric video was a total game changer because now everybody expects footage of the artist,” he explains. “Some lyric videos are even beginning to implement product placement. It’s almost pushing it to the level of a music video, but on a much smaller budget.”

Humpay and his team used Adobe Photoshop to create the graphics for the video, which were then seamlessly composited with the live-action footage using Adobe After Effects and Imagineer Systems mocha for tracking. Humpay also served as visual effects supervisor for the shoot.

“Using the iPhone interface made the project much easier,” Humpay says. “People are already familiar with the layout and design, and the dimensions fit very naturally on a range of screens.”

This isn’t Perry’s first tech-inspired lyric video. For “Wide Awake,” she told the story of her recent career events through Facebook’s Timeline feature, including a photo with Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg. **ME**