

Brooks: the Olympic Committee's Rule 40

Problem

How does a sportswear maker company bring attention to a controversial Olympic rule?

Solution

By using an OOH campaign with simple yet powerful messaging to bring the rule to light.

Background

The Olympic Committee's Rule 40 did not promote the inclusive spirit of the games. It stated that, "No competitor, coach, trainer or official who participates in the Olympic Games may allow his person, name, picture, or sports performances to be used for advertising purposes during the Olympic Games." Most of the Olympic's track and field athletes lived far below the poverty line, and this law put them at risk of disqualification. Out of the athletes who ranked top 10 in the nation, only 50 percent earned more than \$15,000 a year. Professionals that chose to dedicate their life to a sport were rarely acknowledged for it. Rule 40 unfairly impeded athletes to market themselves at a time when they were most visible. It also stopped them from showing their support to local businesses that stood behind them on their journey to the games.

Objective

Brooks wanted to make the world take notice of the injustice by creating a campaign that supported athletes and protested this rule. Its goal was to expose Rule 40 as much as possible on an extremely small budget. Brooks wanted to reach Olympic Trial attendees in Eugene, OR, and Olympic viewers around the world. At the same time, it was essential to capture the attention of the Olympic Committee and news outlets to spread the message.

Strategy

To generate awareness for the restrictive nature of Rule 40, the advertiser crafted a generic message with restrictive language. It would need to look simple but feel loud for visibility and impact. It had to be placed strategically to capture the public's attention at the right moments. To protest the law while maintaining Brooks' anonymity, out-of-the-box generic ads were created with a bold, unbranded message. The OOH campaign was designed with disruptive language and bright yellow color and surrounded the Track and Field Olympic Trials being held in Eugene. A social campaign ran in conjunction to the OOH ads in July 2016 to start an internet frenzy and spread the message beyond the Olympic Trials.

Plan Details

**who are you cheering for?
the powers that be
or the athletes that do?**

*generic worldwide quadrennial
sporting event advertisement

rule40.com

**this is the road to somewhere,
but we're not allowed to say where.
or who's on it.**

*generic worldwide quadrennial sporting event advertisement **rule40.com**

**good luck, you know
who you are, on making it
you know where.**

*generic worldwide quadrennial
sporting event advertisement

rule40.com

Markets: Albany and Eugene, OR

Flight Dates: OOH bulletin (Albany, OR) June 27 to July 10; mobile billboard (Eugene, OR) July 1 to July 10

OOH Formats Used: OOH bulletin and mobile billboard

Target Audiences: Olympic viewers, Olympic Trial attendees, and the Olympic Committee

Budget: \$25K

Results

Brooks remained anonymous until the Wall Street Journal revealed them in an article three weeks after the campaign ended. The article created additional exposure for the cause and the Brooks brand at the national level. The movement continued even after the reveal, with seven other publications picking up the campaign and multiple TV outlets featuring Brooks as the athlete's hero. Despite its limited budget, the campaign generated the following: 1 million OOH impressions, 2 million social impressions, 29,357 mentions of "Rule 40" across all social media handles during the campaign, and 25,000 visits to the microsite from 135 different countries. Twitter received 1.69 million tweet impressions, 592 mentions, and 140,300 profile visits (4,640 while driving). There were 242 tweets per day, which was a 384 percent increase from before the campaign.

Additional Information

[Website](#)

OOH Images:

[DoltOutdoors](#)

Social Activity:

[Twitter](#)

[Facebook](#)

[Instagram](#)

Articles and TV Segments:

[The Wall Street Journal](#)

[CNBC](#)

[LA Times](#)

[AP](#)

[Bloomberg](#)

[Yahoo Finance](#)

[The Globe and Mail](#)

[Brand Channel](#)

[Paste Magazine](#)

[Cheddar](#)