

## United Airlines

### Problem

How does an airline company prove to travelers that its hub airport is a better travel option for New Yorkers?

### Solution

By using digital taxi tops to show exact travel times to the hub airport and its competitor.

### Background

John F. Kennedy Airport (JFK) had long been considered New York's Airport. However, Newark Airport (EWR) made claims that it was better for New York travelers, the most compelling being its proximity and simplicity. United had an opportunity to change people's perception about Newark and prove once and for all that flying out of EWR instead would save them valuable time. The campaign launched on the heels of a \$120 million renovation to United Terminal C at Newark Airport. Over 41 million passengers flew out of Newark each year with over 28 million on United, based on the company's data. It ranks 15th in terms of passenger volume amongst US airports.

### Objective

United wanted to reach New Yorkers on the move. The campaign's primary goal was to help them realize the precious time they could save by traveling to EWR instead of JFK. If it was successful, travelers would reconsider their airport and airline choices when planning their next getaway.

### Strategy

New Yorkers placed a lot of value on their time, which made taxi tops the perfect place to implement a hyper-targeted strategy that is usually limited to online platforms. The execution served dynamic messaging that showcased the drive times to JFK versus EWR in context, fueled by real-time mobile and taxi location data. While there were other standard, non-dynamic components in the overall campaign, this interactive OOH format used GPS real-time traffic data to dispel any myths about travel durations. To prove it, United fitted 125 New York City taxis with GPS software to show a real-time comparison of the travel times between the city and each airport. The technology was developed to create a first-of-its-kind campaign for OOH transit advertising. The digital taxi displays worked by syncing data from an application and updating with every change in a taxi's location, inclusive of evolving traffic patterns. More than 45,000 data points were analyzed to optimize the campaign throughout key areas in New York. On the rare occasion that JFK had a quicker route time than EWR due to unforeseen circumstances like traffic or construction, the taxi top reverted back to a standard brand message.



## Plan Details

Markets: New York, NY

Flight Dates: May 25 - December 31, 2017

OOH Formats Used: Digital Taxi Tops

Target Audiences: Frequent travelers to Manhattan

## Results

The United dynamic taxi top campaign was immediately picked up by numerous top-tier media outlets, including *Adweek's Agency Spy*, *Mediapost*, *Creativity*, *The Points Guy*, *Airliners*, and *The Chicago Business Journal*, among other publications. This response came from the company's innovative approach to use mobile and location data to literally "drive" a contextually relevant OOH campaign. Its efforts garnered over 26 million earned consumer media impressions within the first month after launch. United's Director of Global Advertising, Daniel Cuellar, expressed his enthusiasm around implementing "new and innovative technology on taxi tops that not only grabs the attention of New Yorkers, but helps deliver the message that Newark Liberty International is much closer and easy to get to than you think."

## Testimonials

"The 'New York Minute' is all important to Manhattanites, yet many subjugate this tenet to the irrational view that JFK is their most convenient airport," said McGarryBowen ECD and Managing Director Haydn Morris. "How better to convince them than to utilize their favorite, iconic transport- plus everyone knows that taxi-drivers have the answer to everything, right?"

## Additional Information

YouTube Videos:

- [Taxi Top Video](#)
- [Case Study: United Airlines, The New United in NY](#)

Media hits:

- [Ad Week](#)
- [AdAge](#)
- [MediaPost](#)
- [The Points Guy](#)
- [Digital Signage Connection](#)
- [Airliners.net](#)