

BBSA, 'SHOW UP'

Problem

How does a youth focused volunteer group increase it's volunteer pool and overcome preconceived commitment barriers?

Solution

Use OOH to show others how easy it is to volunteer and that the sharing even a small amount of your time can make a huge impact.

Background

In the summer of 2014, The Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Bay Area had more than 800 kids, "Littles", waiting to be matched with a mentor or "Big." Eighty-two percent of kids on the waiting list were African American or Latino boys, aged 6-18 years old with the majority falling between the ages 8-12 years.

Enduring a shortage of volunteers, particularly males, the BBBSBA turned to the Out-of-Home industry to inspire San Franciscans to 'sign up' to be a Big Brother or Sister to a child in need.

Common barriers to participation are generally related to the time commitment required and insecurity about the experience or skills required to be a mentor. Uncertainty about relating to a kid or defining activities are also commonly raised issues. Some feel that they don't have "what it takes" to be a mentor. Most people don't realize that special skills aren't required – the biggest requirement is the ability to show up consistently and be yourself.



Objective

Raise the visibility of BBBSBA and particularly drive male enrollment in the program. The BBBSBA wanted to convey to the Bay Area that volunteering isn't just a need of theirs, but a fulfilling experience when you 'sign up'—you only need to 'SHOW UP' and be yourself to do the job "right."

Strategy

The primary target was young men between the ages of 23-33 years (old enough to mentor, but young enough to feel like a big brother) with a focus on African Americans and Latinos living in the Bay Area.

Pithy messages like "All You Need to Bring is You" were paired with images of children sharing moments with their Big Brothers on OOH media throughout the Bay Area ranging from posters, large-format static and digital bulletins to street-level and transit advertising. OOH was placed in areas that were more concentrated towards the target demographics.

The medium is the message! Moments and messages were kept simple, at a glance the need was recognizable, yet so was the solution.

Plan Details

Markets: San Francisco Bay Area

Flight Dates: September 2014 to January 2015

OOH Formats: Bulletins, Digital Bulletins, Posters, Transit Advertising

Results

Within weeks of hitting the streets, the BBBSBA experienced an astounding increase in volunteers by nearly 80% and sustained an average of 50% more volunteers per month for the duration of the year-long campaign compared to the months preceding the effort.

During the first month (September 2014) of the campaign, inquiries for “Bigs” nearly doubled versus the month prior. By January of 2015, male “Big” inquiries surpassed female inquiries for the first-time-ever! There was such an influx of applicants that “Bigs” are still being processed months after the campaign has ended...

