

Chick-fil-A

Problem

How do you increase awareness when you are vastly outspent by your competitors?

Solution

Create an outdoor presence that dominates a city's roadways.

Background

Being the underdog is nothing new for Chick-fil-A. It sells chicken to a nation that worships the hamburger. It is closed on Sundays, giving up a substantial amount of revenue for a strongly held principle. And it is significantly outspent within the quick-service restaurant (QSR) category. Its biggest competitor spends more in a week than we do in a year.



How do you even begin to make an impact when the odds are stacked against you? In the case of Chick-fil-A, it was a combination of renegade cows and a medium that could stop traffic, literally. OOH is a medium largely overlooked by deep-pocketed competitors, giving Chick-fil-A a place to deliver its message with little competitive clutter.

OOH has been the primary brand driver for Chick-fil-A for 15 years. But in the last year, it decided to step it up a notch and really shine the spotlight on the medium and its cows.

Objective

The objective was to locate the most high-profile outdoor units in key markets and create an outdoor presence that dominated a city's roadways.

Strategy

Chick-fil-A's home market, Atlanta, quickly bought into this media objective, and immediately began to secure premium units within the market. Spectacular units and a number of high profile permanent locations were added to help blanket the city with unique, impactful support.

Plan Details

In Atlanta, placements include a water tower with a cow dangling precariously from it; a giant, full-frontal approach wall; high-profile permanent units on major connector freeways; and a 40-foot tomahawk-chopping cow at Turner Field. In addition to the high-profile units, Chick-fil-A has a base of rotary locations using its famous 3D cows.

Results

Chick-fil-A saw significant lifts in both brand awareness and brand affiliation within the Atlanta market. This speaks to the power of the OOH campaign, given that it is the largest piece of the plan and because the outdoor creative generally promotes the brand and not specific products or dayparts.

In a study conducted annually by Chick-fil-A, Atlanta saw a 60 percent increase in people who think of Chick-fil-A first when asked, “Which quick-service restaurant have you seen or heard any type of advertisement for in the past 30 days?” Considering the spending differential between Chick-fil-A and its hamburger QSR competitors, this is quite an accomplishment. Additionally, over 76 percent of people reported that they “always enjoy seeing the cow ads,” an increase from the previous year. Both of these statistics demonstrate that outdoor still can deliver the objectives in a way that is not only cost-effective but memorable.

Based on the success of the Atlanta campaign, other Chick-fil-A markets have signed on to the high-impact outdoor strategy.