

WINDOWS 8

2013 OOH Media Plan of the Year

Problem

How does a once-dominant brand name re-establish itself in the marketplace?

Solution

Use an OOH event to launch the campaign and support it with a broader plan across multiple markets.

Background

Microsoft's Windows has gone from a position of leadership to a product viewed as outdated or declining. When Apple first introduced the iPad, the tablet market was born along with the threat to the PC market. Windows 8 is Microsoft's vanguard into this segment, allowing people to customize their experience and content. The challenge was to introduce a new way to interact with technology through Windows 8.

Objective

When tablets were first introduced, people didn't understand the full capabilities of devices and touchscreens until they interacted with them. With that in mind, the objective was to show peer influencers ages 18-49 how Windows 8 and the new devices could change their experience, whether on a PC, tablet, or a new breed of hybrid devices. We wanted people to feel like Windows 8 opens a new way of looking at life, where every screen opens up a new world of possibilities. Plus, with the holidays right around the corner, we needed to plant the seed for Windows 8 devices as the must-have devices of the season.



Strategy

The team turned NYC's Times Square into "Tiles Square" on the night of October 25 for the initial launch of Windows 8 by fluidly syncing a dynamic experience across 39 screens for 18 hours over three days. No one else has succeeded in creating a synced screen experience of this magnitude and scale ever before. On the ground, people could interact with Windows 8 at 20 kiosks featuring Microsoft Surfaces and other Windows 8 touch-enabled devices from partners like HP and Samsung, try out native Windows 8 versions of their favorite apps, and visit the newly opened Microsoft Store in Times Square. As everyone started having fun with Windows 8 devices – playing games, drawing pictures and taking photos – the interactions went live on several of the big screens above. Microsoft had ambassadors on the ground to help people familiarize themselves with the new OS and devices as well.

To extend beyond the launch, the planning team leveraged the campaign's messaging to showcase the functionality of new tablets with Windows 8. The team strategically choose OOH formats that would marry the message to the medium. Multiple markets used wrapped doors on subways so when the train doors opened and closed, they visually demonstrated how the tablet keyboard and screen easily connect and disconnect for both work and play. Other formats, such as tandem pairs of billboards with extensions framing each side of a major highway or high trafficked area, to deliver the same message.

Plan Details

Markets: New York, Los Angeles, Chicago

OOH Formats Used & Flight Dates:

October 25-27, 2012: 39 synced digital screens and 20 product kiosks in designated event space in Times Square.

October 19 - December 23: Double decker wraps and tandem bulletin pairs in all markets; subway posters, car cards and exterior stripes in New York & Chicago; articulated bus wraps and ultra super kings in Chicago; and iconic bulletin placements on the Sunset Strip of Los Angeles.

Results

“Tiles Square” was an OOH event of incredible magnitude and became the largest live event in Times Square history, according to the City of New York. Over two million people attended “Tiles Square” live in New York for the first synced screen experience of its kind and the largest and most complex interactive OOH event in history. The scale of the event extended nationally across the US through digital and social media with over 20,000 online conversations, with 30 percent of search queries related to the event coming from outside of New York.

By late November, 40 million Windows 8 licenses sold. That’s 10 million more than Windows 7 in its first two months of launch. By early January, that number climbed to 60 million. Microsoft is now solidified in the touchscreen tablet era.

