

HCL Technologies: Becoming India's most preferred millennial employer

Source: Marketing Society, Excellence Awards, Winner, Brand revitalisation and Best from outside the UK, 2017

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This case study shows how HCL, an IT services company, partnered with a famous job searching reality TV show to increase its talent acquisition among the Indian youth.

- HCL had a failing image as a career destination amongst Indian millennials, and to turn the tide, HCL decided to partner with reality show 'GetAJob', where 12 top employers provide internship opportunities to the successful applicants, while showcasing the company.
- HCL promoted an inhouse competition to find the brand's spokesperson, to be featured in a film about HCL's internship opportunity at Manchester United and their digital transformation journey platform.
- A 360 degree digital marketing campaign across social media platforms and digital channels was used to reach both participation and viewership, including through Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Whatsapp, as was the use of social influencers and media partnerships.
- HCL emerged as the most preferred employer with over 35% of unique applicants.

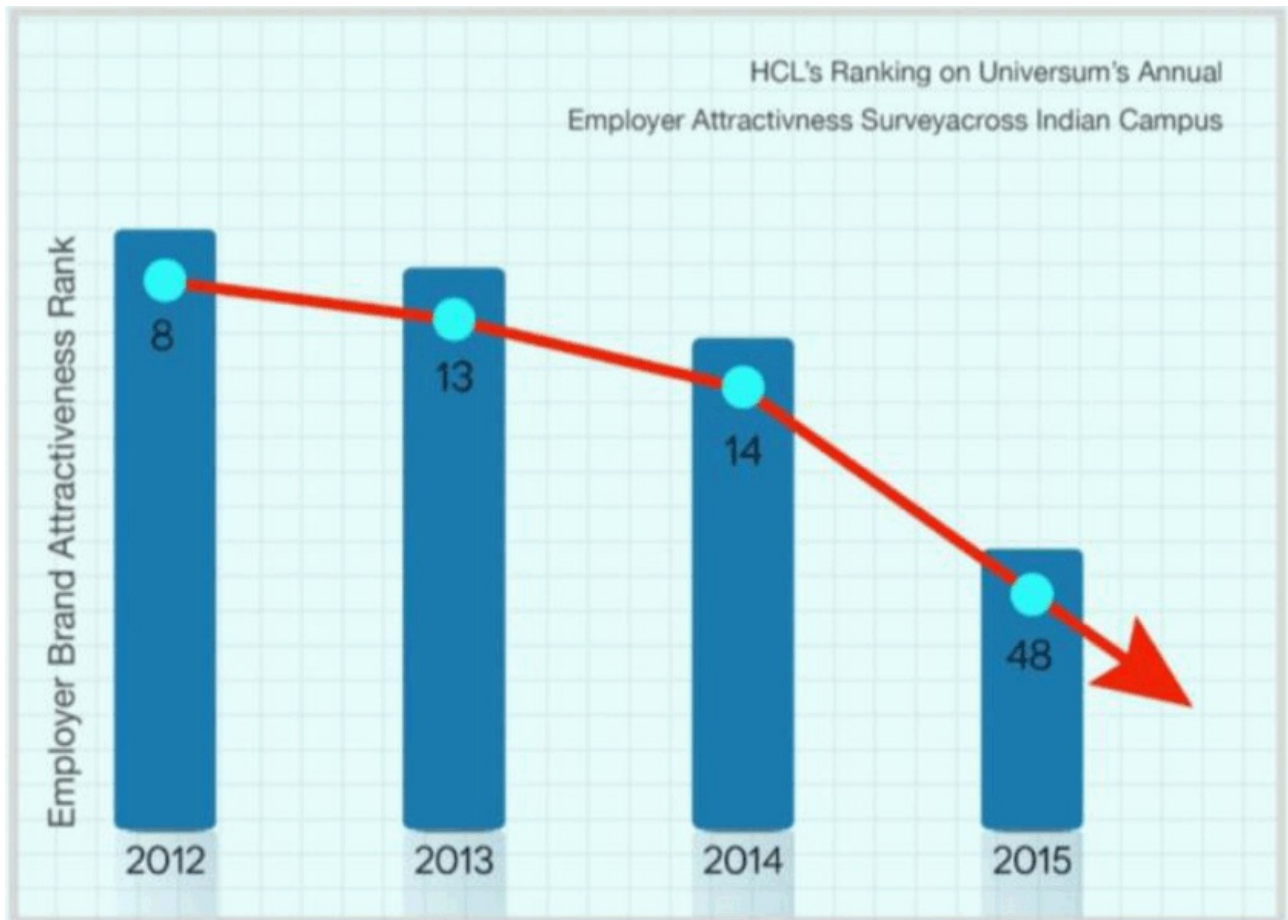
The challenge

HCL Technologies had a problem.

The \$7 Billion Global IT services company comprised of 100000+ Ideapreneurs across 31 countries, which adds tens of thousands to its ranks annually has a falling image as a career destination amongst Indian millennials on college campuses- the talent pool of tomorrow.

This was cause for concern as HCL is an organization of millennials, with over 75% of our workforce belonging to Gen-Y (under ages 35yrs).

A decreasing presence on India b-school and e-school coupled with decreasing attractiveness of IT/ITES as a sector to pursue a career have led to HCL's Talent brand equity taking a massive hit.



Amongst millennials, IT/ITES firms such as HCL are increasingly less preferred as destinations for a career, with college going students who aspire for the tech industry, in favor of product based companies associated with innovation such as Google ,Microsoft, Amazon, Facebook or the rising clutch of homegrown Indian tech start-ups: Ola, Zomato, Flipkart etc.

Amongst the Indian B-school crowd, IT companies on the whole are rarely opted for, with a significant share of management students former workers from the IT space looking for a career shift .

Employer branding expert Universum's annual study on most attractive employers among Indian campus students, highlighted an alarming fall in HCL's rankings year on year (#8 in 2012 to #48 in the 2015 study for Technology institutes, #24 in 2013 to #78 in 2015 for Business schools). While this downward trend was also observable for our competitors in the IT services sector, they did not mimic our rapid fall in rankings over the same timeframe. This would significantly impact the cost of talent acquisition in the coming years, in a commoditized situation where top talent find no differentiation besides compensation packages.

Understanding the target audience

Often Indian IT companies firms hire in large numbers and as consequent of that the employees become a replaceable asset. The nature of work is menial and cumbersome. Our Millennial audience is looking to make a positive difference. Amongst our Talent space IT companies on the whole are a last resort for a candidate with a significant share of management students possessing prior work experience in the IT industry prior to pursuing management studies, primarily to seek a career shift to different domains and sectors.

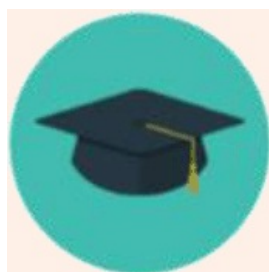
The Nielsen campus track business school survey showed over two years that IT/ITES companies failed to make it into the top 5 sectors in terms of preferred industry. Technology enthusiasts were increasingly drawn to E-commerce which had emerged as the most preferred location (28%) in 2015. A survey at India's top B-schools also showcased a year on year fall in the preference for IT (9.2% to 6.88%) No IT/ITES firms enter the top 10 and top 20 lists of dream employers as polled by participants of B-schools.



Students Pursuing graduate/post graduate courses



Indian B-school & Engineering colleges



Age: 18-26 Indian B-school B.E/B.Tech/MBA/ M.Tech.

To turn the tide we decided to partner with LinkedIn and iconic youth brand MTV as part of their reality show: GetAJob, now in its second season.

GetAJob sees India's top employers (12 in Season 2) offer college going students across the country dream internships/jobs. Aspirants have to apply using their LinkedIn profiles (as CVs & resumes are passé for next gen recruiters). Candidates who get shortlisted then have to make a minute-long video elevator pitch. The top 5 candidates then move on to a televised selection episode at the employer's premises which is aired on MTV India.



As a great avenue to reach out to and engage with the millennial talent of the country both on campus as well as those watching at home,

- HCL embraced its involvement with GetAjob and sought to emerge as the preferred employer amongst the 12 participating brands.
- This would be the first platform to take HCLs culture of ideapreneurship™
- to a wider external audience, with a dedicated brand episode featured on MTV India

Execution



GetAJob saw India's top employers (12 in Season 2) offer aspirants dream internships/jobs. They had to apply through LinkedIn during a time period from September 2015 to January 2016. We sought to emerge as the employer with the maximum application count through an organization wide effort, where a digital marketing campaign promoting our offering would be supplemented by employee advocacy. Harnessing the power of social referrals, we leveraged the power of 100,000+ employees to increase the reach of our campaign. We designed a common campaign theme of "GET THERE" . For aspirants to our internship profile, it referred to the internship at Manchester. For our employees evangelizing the offering on social media, we gave them a chance to be on MTV during HCL's episode. This theme was consistently maintained across all communication :

external and internal.

GetAJob saw India's top employers (12 in Season 2) offer aspirants dream internships/jobs. They had to apply through LinkedIn during a time period from September 2015 to January 2016. We sought to emerge as the employer with the maximum application count through an organization wide effort, where a digital marketing campaign promoting our offering would be To "Get There" the ideapreneur had to serve as a employer brand ambassador on social media, spreading the word about HCL's internship profile to their respective networks, in the process referring aspirants to apply for us. The top five social ambassadors then mirrored GetAJob aspirants by making a video pitch explaining why they should be the face of HCL on MTV. Fellow ideapreneurs would then cast their vote on a microsite to choose who gets to represent them on HCL's GetAJob episode.

Dream internship at theatre of dreams:

To create a compelling internship profile to stand out from the crowd, we decided to leverage our association with the world's No.1 sporting franchise: Manchester United, with whom we teamed up as their official digital transformation partner.

- We offered candidates an internship at the Theatre of Dreams: Old Trafford, with the chance to work on Manchester United's digital transformation journey.
- The internship profile would see the winning intern, work with the digital marketing and brand team to come up with innovative campaigns to harness our relationship with one of the world's most iconic brands.
- To help the intern better ideate, we offer him an all-expenses paid trip to Manchester, U.K as well as experience first hand the dynamics of our synergistic partnership.



A Digital Marketing & Brand internship



An all expense paid trip to Manchester, U.K



Match tickets to a game at Old Trafford

360° Media strategy

A 360° digital marketing campaign across social media platforms and digital channels to reach the digital natives. HCL embraced the new age social channels such as WhatsApp & Instagram to drive maximum participation & engage our Gen Y audience instead of traditional recruitment channels. We also engaged our 100,000 strong employee force to spread the word through the internal contest. Besides our employees,

channels of referrals included applicants to HCL's career page, our alumni database. Influencer marketing (Tweet chats, PR coverage) also helped increase awareness of our offering.

Social Media: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Google+, Whatsapp	Employee advocacy on social through internal microsite	Tweetchat on social recruitment in conjunction with campaign	Referrals: Contests for Manchester United fans
Mailers/Contests engaging HCL's campus network	Referrals: HCL Applicant database	Referrals: HCL Alumni database	Media Coverage by Sportskeeda: a leading sports site
Floor walks by Employee Engagement team for employee contest	On ground Campus activations by MTV and LinkedIn	Exclusive video collaterals designed leveraging MU	No cost partnership with Uber to drive employee contest



11.3 MN



616 K



27.5 MN



100 K



2.7 MN



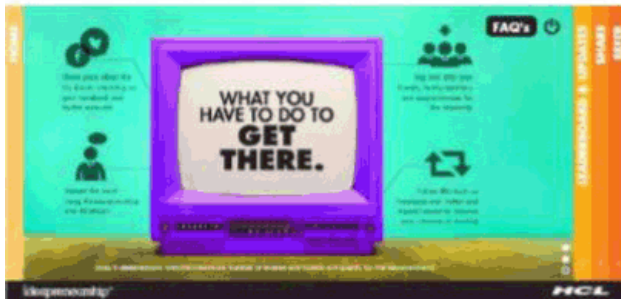
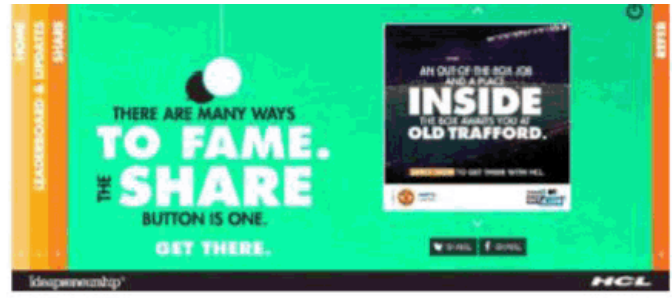
100 K

CHANNELS – DIGITAL IMPRESSIONS

A number of special engagement activities were held to sustain momentum and generate buzz over the course of a draining 4-5-month period.

- Engaging our 80,000+ strong alumni network to refer their friends, family and colleagues
- Remarketing to applicants of HCL job profiles on our career section through mails
- Instagram only contest for students across HCL's 80+ empanelled B-schools
- Social referral contest, where we targeted Man Utd. fans to spread the word about the internship to their friend circles on Facebook/Twitter, with the chance to win jerseys signed by Man United legends
- Special video content generated from MU legend Bryan Robson, encouraging applicants to apply. (36.5 K views)
- An exclusive video was also provided by VJ Gaelyn the host of the GetAJob show, asking aspirants to apply for our profile (25 K views)
- A Twitter roundtable on social recruitment was held featuring HCL's CHRO, which we leveraged to inform about our GetAJob profile.
- Zero Cost partnership with Uber- our Mobility partner, sponsoring the Employee Contest.

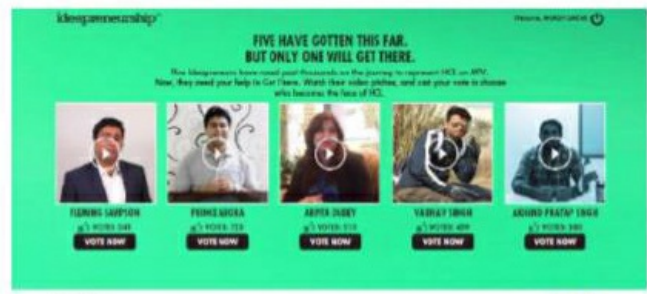
We leveraged our 100K+ ideapreneurs to help spread the word about our unique internship opportunity. A microsite was designed to enable them to advocate our offering to their networks. In the process they compete to earn the chance to get on TV as part of HCL's GETAJOB episode on MTV, as well as a trip to Manchester.



'GET THERE' EMPLOYEE CAMPAIGN MICROSITE FOR SOCIAL AMBASSADORSHIP



PROMOTIONAL BRANDING ON INTERNAL COMMS. CHANNELS - EMPLOYEE INTRANET PORTAL, NEWSLETTER, INTERNAL SOCIAL MEDIA SITE, ENTERPRISE APPS, SCREENSAVERS, POPUPS

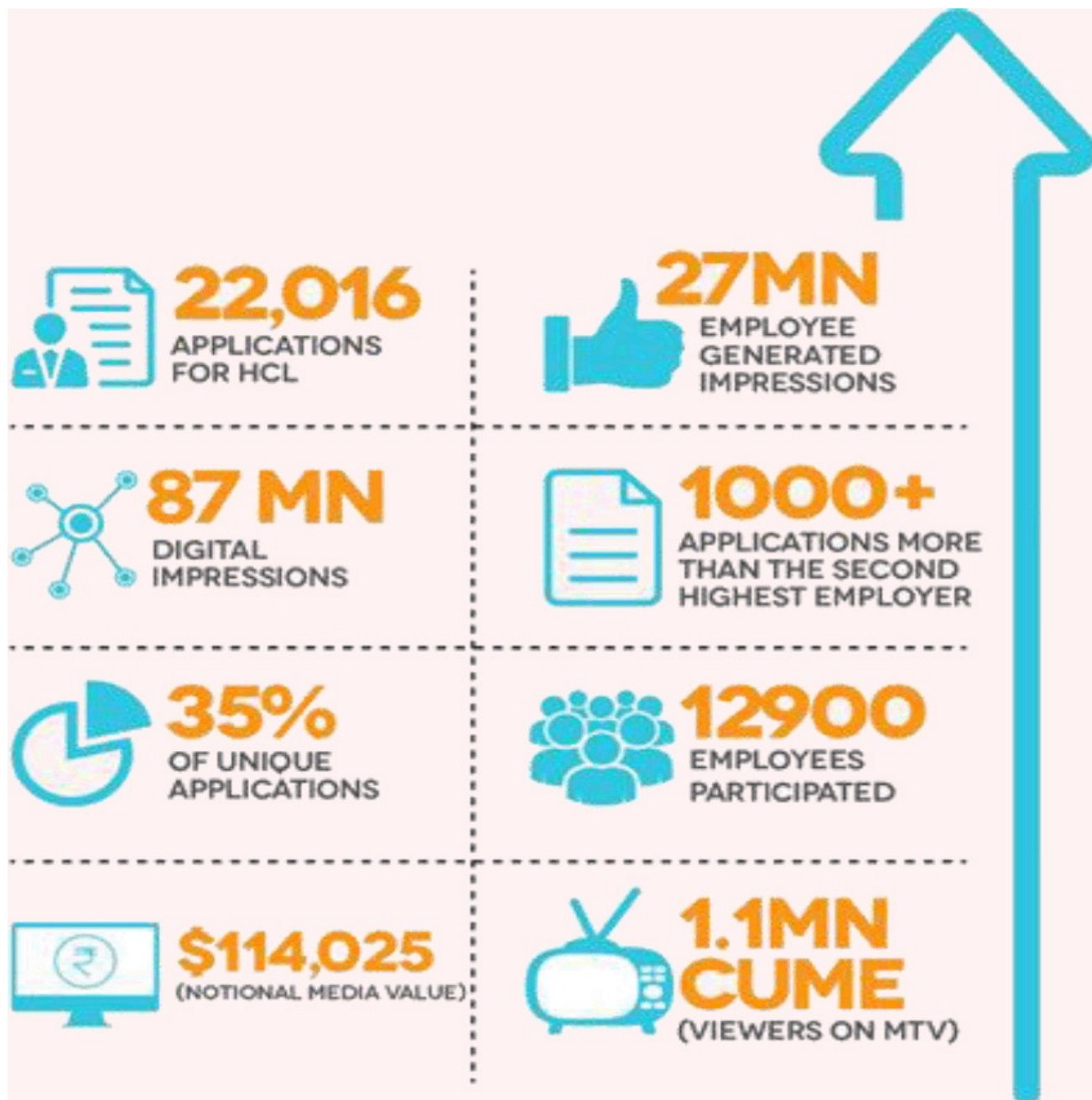


SECOND PHASE OF EMPLOYEE CAMPAIGN : VIDEO PITCH ROUND VOTING MICROSITE WHERE IDEAPRENEURS VOTED FOR THE BEST CANDIDATE



HCL emerges as a top employer

Our integrated marketing campaign and tireless advocacy from our employees bore fruit and at the end of the two-and-a-half month long application phase, we emerged as the most preferred employer with over 35% of unique applicants applying for our profile.



We beat all expectations and swam against the unfavourable tide for IT/ITES as the millennials came in droves to apply for our dream internship. Our social marketing campaign and tireless advocacy from our employees bore fruit and at the end of the application phase, we emerged as the most preferred employer with over 35% of all unique applicants (who applied to at least one of twelve brands) applying to our profile.

This beat the benchmark set during the previous year of GetAJob (Season 1), where the most preferred employer obtained 33% of unique applicants. Furthermore, we obtained a ATL platform to showcase our differentiated employer brand and employee value proposition through a primetime slot on MTV (at zero cost).

In Conclusion

What was truly remarkable with HCL's result in GetAJob season 2, was that given the nature of our competition (11 other competing brands) few would have wagered on us becoming the most preferred employer. We broke

all odds and emerged as an Employer Of Choice from being just a boring IT company.

We competed against employers featured from the very industries and domains that research showed were deemed attractive by the talent pool (e-commerce : Amazon, tech start-ups: Uber, FlipKart, global conglomerates in the lucrative B2C marketing space Pepsi, Marico, Airtel, Reliance, Adidas etc.) than restricting our self just to IT domain. While some companies even offered Full-time jobs, HCL was the only B2B company offering internship that received highest applications from candidates.

A testament to our digital marketing prowess and the power of employee advocacy, HCL is investing on its Talent Brand to ensure differentiation when compared to other IT companies. From the conceptualization of the job profile, to the televised episode format to the unique internship experience, we sought out to truly differentiate and break the perceptions of us as just an IT company. The consolidated efforts of our employees & prospective employees sharing this information about an internship opportunity within their Peer network, is a proof of concept that we as an employer brand have had top of mind recall. We became the part of LinkedIn Top 10 attractors as a courtesy of revitalizing HCLs Talent brand



The tremendous response shown from the talent across the country is a positive sign that HCL will be able to carve out a niche positioning as an innovative, 21st century employer! It is safe to say, **WE GOT THERE!**

Appendix / Annexures

Digital campaign to drive applications

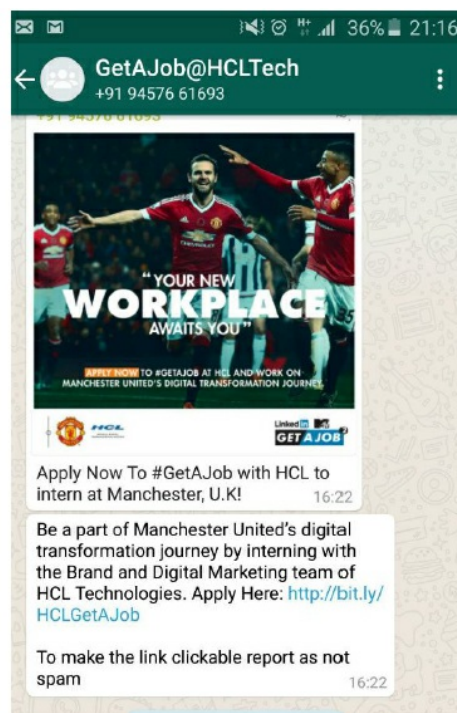
Systematic social engagement across 6 months



Exploration of millennial channels



INSTAGRAM CONTESTS FOR CAMPUS CROWD
MAILER CIRCULATED TO 80+ CAMPUSES



FIRST EVER CAMPAIGN TO
LEVERAGE WHATSAPP

Exclusive contests and content



JERSEY SIGNED BY
MAN UTD LEGEND GIVEAWAY CONTEST:
SOCIAL ADVOCACY CONTEST
TARGETTED AT MAN UTD FANS

100K
IMPRESSIONS
600+
SHARES ON FB
& TWITTER
WITH NO
BUDGET



VIDEO MESSAGE
RECORDED BY BRYAN ROBSON:
MAN UTD LEGEND TO DRIVE APPLICATIONS

36.5 K
VIDEO
VIEWS



TWEETCHAT WITH CHRO
ON SOCIAL RECRUITMENT

17 M+
IMPRESSIONS
WITH NO
BUDGET



EXCLUSIVE VIDEO MESSAGE
BY MTV'S VJ GAELYN

25 K
VIDEO
VIEWS



SOCIAL ADVOCACY
CONTEST WINNER



TWEETCHAT SNAPSHOT:
COVERED BY SOCIAL SAMOSA



EARNED MEDIA COVERAGE BY SPORTSKEEDA - LEADING SPORTS NETWORK

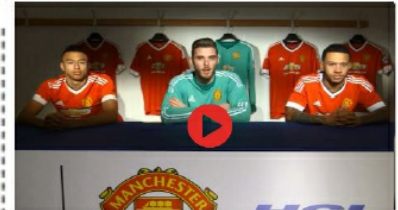
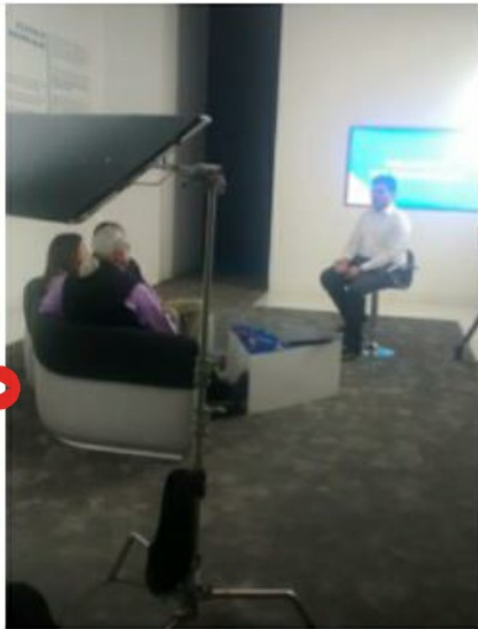


BTL ACTIVATIONS: CAMPUS ROADSHOWS BY MTV



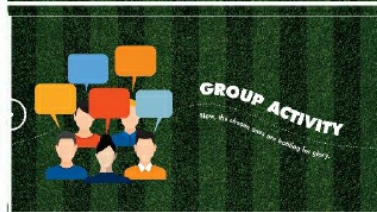
20 + CAMPUSES IN MAJOR METROS ENGAGED BY MTV, PROVIDING FREE BRAND VISIBILITY FOR HCL
HCL PRESENCE ON CAMPUS THROUGH MU JERSEY GIVEAWAY CONTESTS

SHOWCASING IDEAPRENEURSHIP : FILMING HCL'S EPISODE



MU TEAM PLAYER INTERVIEW VIDEO:
USED IN SELECTION PROCESS
DIGITAL VENUE BRANDING

GLIMPSES OF CONTENT GENERATED FOR HCL'S EPISODE
FOCUS ON CREATING ENGAGING CONTENT THAT SHOWCASES THE BEST OF HCL



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words

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