

Google: The Better Wishes

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Source: WARC Media Awards, Shortlisted, Effective Use of Tech, 2017

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Tech giant Google created a digital lantern site to allow users in Taiwan to share the lantern tradition in a more sustainable way, and in doing so, built brand love.

- Lanterns are used as a way to send wishes to the Gods at Chinese New Year, and over 500,000 lanterns are sent every year, but this comes at a cost including fires, massive waste and even lost lives.
- Since Taiwanese people make countless 'wishes' to Google in the form of questions, locals have come to refer to it as the 'Almighty'; Google decided to replicate, in its own way, the beauty of the Taiwanese tradition through a digitised approach.
- Leveraging its HTML5 technology, Google created the better Wishes website that allowed people to create and send their own personalised lanterns, with the site being promoted through different online touchpoints across the Chinese New Year period.
- Over 2.2 million people visited the Better Wishes site, from more than 102 countries worldwide, with around 225,000 people trying digital lanterns, suggesting that 50% of people who typically sent traditional lanterns switched to digital lanterns, reducing the custom's environmental footprint.

Campaign details

Brand: Google Taiwan

Brand owner: Google

Lead agency: OMD Taiwan

Country: Taiwan

Industries: Information technology

Media channels: Websites & microsites

Budget: Up to 500k

Executive Summary

Lanterns have been recognised as the most beautiful way in the world to send wishes to the gods, and over 500,000 lanterns are sent every year into the sky. But this beautiful tradition comes at a serious cost, including fires and lost lives.

Google Taiwan wanted to strengthen its brand resonance in the territory through its technology capabilities. In the Better Wishes campaign, the tradition was brought to life in the digital world through Asia's first ever lantern site, the "Better Wishes" site.

Over 2.2 million people visited the Better Wishes site from more than 102 countries around the world. About 225,000 people tried digital lanterns, representing a shift of 50% of people from traditional lanterns to digital lanterns.

Market background and context

As a leading technology company, Google had both brand equity awareness and state-of-the-art technology. Google was already a key online feature among consumers and had become part of the daily lives of millions of Taiwanese people. But Google wanted to achieve a larger resonance. Therefore, the company was seeking a way to tap into its assets to move from an individual relationship to groups, families, and even the whole country. Moreover, it was looking to engage with audiences not just in less significant or daily moments, but also at national pivotal moments, making its brand relevant to important local culture.

Communications objectives

As a globally recognised company, Google is renowned for its products and capabilities. But its mantra "Do the Right Thing", and iconic brand, created an imperative to lead the industry in doing something positive and meaningful to make the world a better place.

Google wants to engage with audiences at every national moment, raising brand loyalty and making its brand relevant to important local cultural moments. Our challenge was to find ways to not only bring the traditional, ancient Taiwanese custom to life, but translate it into a digital format. It was also crucial to demonstrate and digitalise every element of the tradition through Google's owned assets and technology capabilities, so the audience could experience it in the moment and eventually be willing to shift to the digitalised behaviour.

As engaging its audience during cultural moments is an ongoing goal for Google, KPIs included a comparison versus the prior year's performance. This year, we sought to beat our previous record and set a new, higher bar for campaign success. Therefore, our objective was not only to shift audience behaviour to use digital lanterns during the 2016 CNY campaign (2016/02/8 – 2016/02/22), but to beat last year CNY's activity record of 100,000 submissions as well.

Insights & Strategy

In Taiwan, Chinese New Year represents a new start, a moment to make new wishes for loved ones and find new hope for ourselves for the upcoming 365 days. Writing calligraphy wishes on floating lanterns is common

among Taiwanese people during Chinese New Year. But the beauty of the tradition implies consequences for Taiwan, including fires, waste and even lost lives. Since Taiwanese people make countless "wishes" to Google in the form of questions, locals have come to refer to Google as the "Almighty".

Therefore, this situation created an opening for "almighty Google" to step in and help Taiwan find a better solution that balanced the tradition with the preservation of the environment: The initiative combined the elegance of tradition and the power of technology by helping people to connect in a meaningful way during Chinese New year. This was the initial approach:

- The target audience for the Better Wishes campaign was essentially the general public in Taiwan.
- The campaign was built around Chinese New Year, which is a cultural celebration for all Taiwanese people, young and old, men and women.
- To make the digital concept easier to adapt and promote, the campaign placed an emphasis on the TACO (Tech-Friendly, Aspirational, Curious and Optimistic) audience. This psychographic segment is relatively young and tends to be more open to new concepts.
- The Better Wishes concept involved transforming a tradition into a digital format, so focusing on TACO consumers and turning them into brand and concept ambassadors enabled the Better Wishes to be shared and spread more easily and seamlessly.

Implementation and optimisation

Leveraging Google's cutting edge HTML5 technology to bring an ancient tradition into the digital age, Google created Asia's first ever lantern site, the Better Wishes site:

- Users could create their own wish lanterns.
- The uniqueness of the lanterns was preserved in an interactive way, using hand-drawn calligraphy and allowing users to directly write their wishes on screen, designing lanterns with their own writing.
- Users could easily share their lanterns' blessings with friends and family.
- The design reflected the elegance of the lantern tradition.
- Through the advanced technology of Google Cardboard, users could experience the floating lanterns through VR technology, which brought the lanterns to life.
- Several creative executions represented different New Year scenes.

As Google is not only a titan in the technology industry, but also a well-known provider, it enjoys an owned media benefit that almost no other brand or advertiser can compete with. To promote the site, ad campaigns introduced the Better Wishes site through different online touchpoints across the Chinese New Year period:

- Analysis of audience behaviour and possible schedules determined where the target users were in the digital world.
- Relevant media touchpoints, including online and mobile, were selected to engage prospects, inviting Taiwanese people to partner with Google for a better Taiwan.
- The campaign message was introduced through the Google Display Network, which is Google's owned media channel, to elevate the campaign's power and offer unlimited boundaries for the Better Wishes concept.



Media used

Type of Media	Date of Implementation	Budget / media spend	% of overall budget
Digital media	Feb 8, 2016-Feb 22,w016	\$100,000 / Online news media	100%

Measurement approach and results

As building brand love and making the brand relevant to Taiwanese people were our main objectives in this campaign, reaching a bigger audience and increasing organic media presence became the most important KPIs.

- 179 newspaper news about the campaign, including 177 from online media, representing a total media value of ~\$1 million.
- Over 2.2 million people visited the Better Wishes site from more than 102 countries worldwide, and every user spent an average of 1 minute and 2 seconds in each session.

- The efficient media strategy led about 225,000 people to use digital lanterns, which is 2x higher than last CNY activity's record.
- The number of users suggested that 50% of people who typically sent traditional lanterns switched to digital lanterns, decreasing the custom's environmental footprint.

ROI

Sales/revenue	
Profit	
Value of exposure/coverage	3.1
Other (please state)	

Lessons learned

In the Better Wishes case, Google used its owned assets to bring an ancient Taiwanese custom into a contemporary digital format. Google created a way for more people to see and experience a beautiful Taiwanese tradition while protecting the environment for future generations. And proved that the Better Wishes has been widely experienced by countries other than Taiwan.

Moreover, the Better Wishes can serve as a case for well-known, large-scale enterprises to contribute and leverage their owned assets to help achieve something great, beyond just product sales, creating an imperative to lead the industry in doing something positive and meaningful to make the world a better place.

Client's view

For the Better Wishes campaign, the core content was created by Google to embrace the Chinese lunar New Year with its digital technology, whereas OMD took the responsibility to amplify the event with the right and effective media strategy.

Google wished to convey the "get together and go well" message via digital lanterns to present a social caring spirit as its brand attribute. With limited budget, maximising the campaign's effectiveness through accurate media planning and implementation was a significant challenge. Owing to OMD's keen consumer insight, we were able to employ sophisticated digital marketing knowhow and practice to deliver the correct message to our target audience at the right time. The campaign showed we achieved better results with less investment and every dollar we spent had its great worth.

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