

Adobe: Museum of Digital Media

Source: Jay Chiat Awards, Gold, 2011



Downloaded from WARC

Creative professionals across the globe use Adobe's products every day. However, Adobe's role and value in digital creation often remains unseen and unsung. The challenge was to redefine Adobe as a highly visible central leader within the design, creative and digital worlds. The solution was a digital museum for the twenty-first century, curated, promoted and operated like any other museum, highlighting the impact of digital media on society and encouraging users to engage with the brand. In its first quarter after launch, the Adobe Museum of Digital Media drew traffic volumes on par with the New York Museum of Modern Art. Membership sign-ups averaged 3,000 a month.

Goodby Silverstein and Partners

SUMMARY

Creative professionals across the globe use Adobe's products every day. From building websites to editing feature films, from developing product design to touching up photographs, the act of creation – on desktops, laptops, tablets and mobiles – is almost always enabled by Adobe products.

And yet, Adobe's role and value in digital creation is often invisible – like oxygen, Adobe is essential to the atmosphere (a digital one, in this case) but remains unseen and unsung.

Creativity – the human capacity for wonder, discovery, emulation and aspiration – drives engagement and business. Creativity produces innovation, differentiation and dollars; it should be nurtured and celebrated. We needed to find a way to do that.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Adobe's software has been the creative and design backbone of the Internet. For the last 20 years, its arsenal of tools has literally enabled the creation of our digital world.

However, credit and kudos have always flown toward designers, coders and creatives. Adobe's products are

acknowledged, but by comparison are relegated to the status of tools – they're essential, but they're not viewed as critical.

This lack of criticality has created an opportunity for many new, and often far less expensive, software and design programs that have emerged in recent years.

CHALLENGE: Redefine Adobe as a highly visible central leader within the design, creative and digital worlds. Take credit and celebrate the essential role Adobe has played, and continues to play, in enabling digital experiences by creating a catalyst that will pave the way for future work.

STRATEGIC THINKING

- Attempting to take credit for the whole Internet is a very tall order, and we're dealing with a skeptical audience.
- Adobe's customers live at the cutting edge of digital design. They are light/intermittent consumers of paid media and are hypercritical of conventional marketing.

The conventional solution of pumping money into large-scale brand advertising would be prohibitively expensive and probably ineffective.

Through our research and explorations, we uncovered three insights to guide our strategy:

1. Digital is ephemeral.
2. Creative professionals constantly seek inspiration.
3. Actions speak louder than words.

KEY INSIGHTS

1. Digital is ephemeral.

All digital media has a short shelf life.

While the *Mona Lisa* is permanent, anything digital is only a click away from deletion. In fact, all of today's cutting-edge digital experiences face obsolescence from tomorrow's gains in software and processing performance.

Adobe couldn't hope to classify all digital media (there is no taxonomy), but Adobe could commit to an open-ended leadership role to capture the best of what's happening now before it becomes forgotten.

2. **Creative professionals constantly seek inspiration.**

Creative professionals live and die by their creativity and vision. They constantly seek inspiration anywhere and everywhere. Yet there is no central archive of digital experiences to visit or learn from. Museums such as the V&A in London, the Louvre Museum in Paris and the Guggenheim Museum in New York exist to physically house art forever and form repositories for learning and teaching. Digital media, by contrast, is lost every day, permanently.

Adobe should be a source of inspiration, not just a provider of tools.

Adobe should help celebrate the people and work enabled by their products.

3. **Actions speak louder than words.**

You don't earn credibility by telling people how great you are; you prove it by your actions. It is important for Adobe, as an enabler of digital experiences, to communicate with its audience by showing rather than telling. We needed to demonstrate creativity rather than merely claim it.

Build an experience that draws an audience; create an idea that can be advertised, not advertising for itself.

SOLUTION: CREATE A MUSEUM, DIGITALLY

We needed to claim greater credit for the Internet, demonstrate leadership and inspire our target audience by collecting and curating the digital content that Adobe's products have helped to create.

And rather than create expensive communications, we decided to build something for the digital age itself.

The solution was a living, shape-shifting museum for the twenty-first century, curated, promoted and operated like any other museum – except without the guards, the lines, the hours, the doors and the entrance fees.

Welcome to the Adobe Museum of Digital Media (AMDM).

The AMDM functions as if it exists in the real world, and as if its core mission is to highlight the impact of digital media on society and to encourage users to engage with the brand.

EXECUTION

- Approach all communication through the lens of building an evolving and curated digital space
- Leverage the natural talking points and communication cadence of a real museum to drive media/PR chatter
- Invest in PR and content (rather than impressions and reach via paid media) and let others do the talking

What the AMDM did

Commissioned renowned architect Filippo Innocenti to design the museum

Hired a board of directors and a museum director

Held quarterly exhibitions, curated by influencers who shape digital media

Created welcome films outlining the AMDM mission and approach

Exploited unique data for a museum

Developed search, social media and announcements through paid media

Offered memberships

How we amplified through and across media

Promoted the formal bidding process, hiring and eventual release of architectural plans via seeding, PR, blogs and social media

Reached out to director and curator followers and their spheres of influence

Contacted communities of interest around the artists and influencers

Seeded across the web; brought to art events and festivals

Created news using analytics only available to a digital museum: time spent with each exhibit, engagement, etc.

Exploited digital nature of museum to behaviorally and contextually drive visits- every single exhibit had its own share-point tools to Twitter, Facebook and other social-sharing services

Used social media to gift and share

RESULTS

Connection with the Adobe brand:

- In its first quarter after launch, the AMDM drew traffic volumes on par with the world-famous New York Museum of Modern Art (MoMA).
- Membership sign-ups average 3,000 a month; the site and its contents continue to spark a barrage of social media discussion.
- Visitors are spending extended periods of time exploring the site and returning regularly, surpassing Adobe and industry benchmarks for engagement. The site was named by the Favorite Website Awards (FWA) as their site of the day.

Conversation and organic discovery:

- Over 200 news media organizations in North America alone have covered the AMDM, including CNBC, New York Daily News and the BBC.
- Over 20% of all site visitors have arrived via Facebook.
- Seeded welcome film has been viewed over 2.5M times outside the museum site.

CONCLUSION

Adobe has stepped in to create a new museum, performing critical work in capturing the digital landscape

shaping our society and culture. It is a resource of creative inspiration and learning. It is a dramatic and significant investment by Adobe, positioning the brand as a true leader and integral partner to digital creativity.

The Adobe Museum of Digital Media and the work housed in it serve as dynamic landmarks of where digital was, is and will be – and both are testaments to Adobe's role in shaping culture.

© Copyright American Association of Advertising Agencies 2011

American Association of Advertising Agencies

1065 Avenue of the Americas, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10018

Tel: +1 212 682 2500, Fax: +1 212 682 8391

www.warc.com

All rights reserved including database rights. This electronic file is for the personal use of authorised users based at the subscribing company's office location. It may not be reproduced, posted on intranets, extranets or the internet, e-mailed, archived or shared electronically either within the purchaser's organisation or externally without express written permission from Warc.

WARC

