

20 of the Best Marketing & Advertising Campaigns

(And What to Steal From Them)

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INTRODUCTION

When you think about marketing and advertising content, it's not uncommon for the following questions to come to mind: How can we earn more customers? How can we upsell our existing customers? How can we position ourselves in the best light against our competition?

And it's not wrong to think about these things. In fact, advancing your business should always be a priority -- something you are constantly working towards. Though, have you ever stopped to consider how asking those questions alone might be clouding your creativity?

Think about it: What if you pair those questions with something like, "What are the needs of our audience?" or "What is blocking our audience from seeking out our solution?"

These slightly more developed questions have the ability to draw out untapped opportunities and fresh brand stories. And that's exactly what you can expect from the campaigns featured in this guide.

That being said, the campaigns featured on this list made the cut for a variety of reasons -- from timeless, powerful messaging to thoughtful, innovative distribution channels. And despite their variety, each featured campaign had a positive impact on the growth of the business and left a lasting impression on the consumer -- two critical success metrics in the world of marketing and advertising.

As you work through each example, don't forget to make note of the lessons distilled in the "steal this" section. We've done our best to boil down precisely what made each campaign so effective, so you can take those learnings back to your team and your next brainstorm.



Software & Tech



Image Credit Adweek

- Campaign: 2018 Goals
- Brand: Spotify
- Creative: Spotify

STEAL THIS:

- Do your homework and collect some data on your consumers. It will give you a wealth of information to draw upon for campaigns and product or service development.

- Spotify has proven that data doesn't have to be boring. Use your data to elicit a feeling of connection from consumers. Translate it in a way that makes people be able to relate and visualize themselves in that position.

Need help setting your New Year's resolution? Spotify has just the thing.

Inspired by its own hilarious user data, the music-streaming giant crafted a series of colorful end-of-year ads dubbed: "2018 Goals."

The goals included quips like: "Be as loving as the person who put 48 Ed Sheeran songs on their "I Love Gingers" playlist" and "Take a page from the 3,445 people who streamed the Boozy Brunch playlist on a Wednesday this year."

The ads instantly resonated with Spotify users because the messages served as an honest, humorous reflection of their own habits.

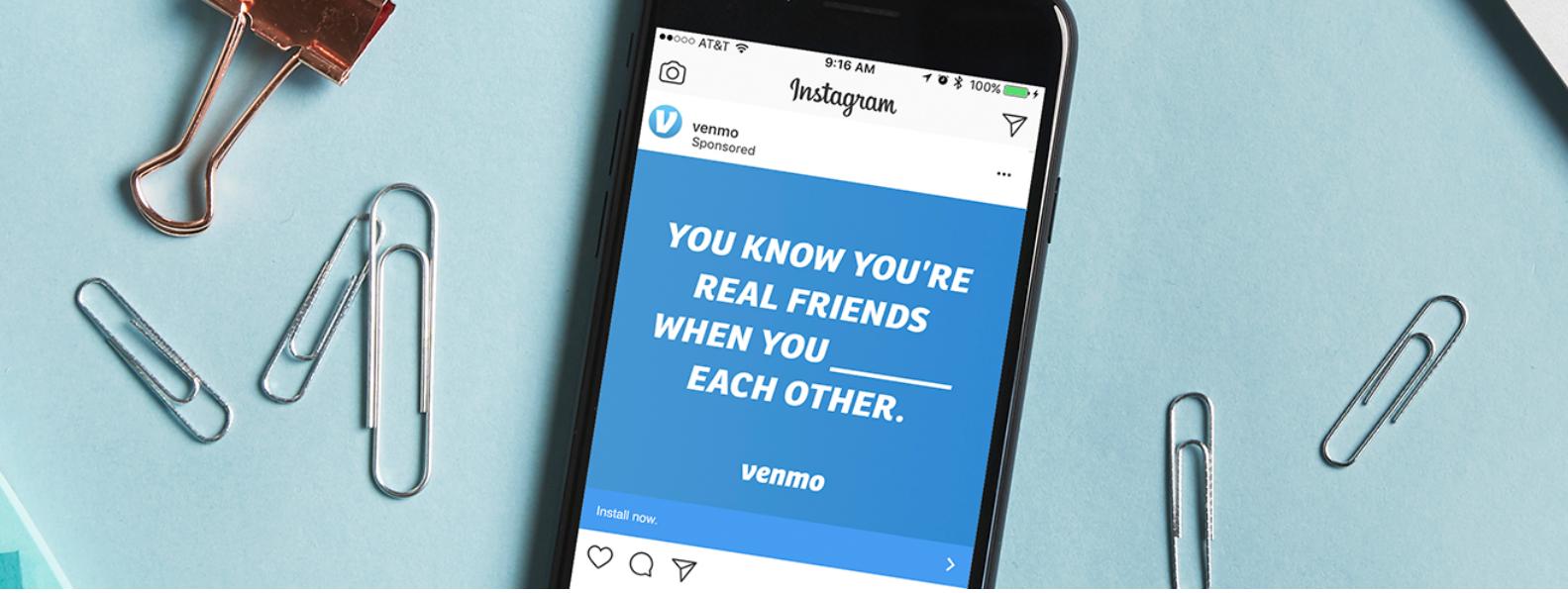


Image Credit Adweek

- Campaign: Blank Me
- Brand: Venmo
- Creative: Venmo

STEAL THIS:

- Post-purchase communication is vital. It pays to keep the conversation about your brand going to keep people coming back for more – and telling their friends.

- Don't forget to reinforce the role your product or service plays in people's lives. Use campaigns to highlight how much easier life is with the help of your offering.

Venmo, the app that lets you make and share payments, is on a mission to become a verb.

In an effort to achieve this goal, the app chose to target millennials through a mad-lib style campaign called "Blank Me." The ads contained sentences with a blank space (where the word Venmo seemed to fit perfectly) were placed around bars, restaurants, and college towns to drum up conversation about the app. The campaign also included digital ads across networks and services like Twitter, Facebook, and Spotify.

The cheeky campaign wasn't necessarily aimed at new user acquisition, but rather brand reinforcement. And it did just that.



Image Credit: LaoFuSu/Reddit

- Campaign: Y-U-No?
- Brand: Hipchat
- Creative: Hipchat

STEAL THIS:

- Not everything you put out there has to be complex and have a lot of layers to it. Sometimes simple and funny is just what you need.
- Having trouble generating awareness for your product or brand? Make people feel like they are missing out on something – like Hipchat did here by asking people why they weren't using its service yet. They don't call it FOMO for nothing!

At the time, if you mentioned the company Hipchat, chances are people would look at you with a confused look and would have no idea what or who it was. And Hipchat knew that.

They decided to run an out of home billboard campaign to bring awareness to their brand. But then were then posed with the problem of how do they attract attention while telling people who they are?

They designed the billboard on the tenant: make it simple but significant. Using the popular Y-U-No guy from Rage Comics, and pairing it with a simple question asking people why they don't use their product, the company had a 300% spike in direct online searches.

Let's build an even better Bay Area together.

Through the Google Impact Challenge, we awarded \$5.5 million to Bay Area nonprofits. A [panel of advisors](#) helped us select ten nonprofits with innovative ideas for building a better Bay Area, with the top funding recipients chosen by a public vote.

Image Credit: Google

- Campaign: Building a Better Bay Area
- Brand & Creative: Google

STEAL THIS:

- Keep it local! It's always nice when a large corporation gives some love to its community -- in fact, 72% of folks say they would tell friends and family about a business's efforts like these, according to a Cone Communication study.

- Remember the "you're already there" approach. Find out where your audience is already hanging out and engage them there, instead of trying to get them to take action where they don't usually spend their time.

Corporate philanthropy is definitely on the rise. Between 2012-2014, 56% of companies increased charitable giving, and Google is no exception.

But when the search engine giant gave away \$5.5 million to Bay Area nonprofits, it let the public decide where that money would go -- in an unconventional, interactive way.

Google allowed people to cast their votes online, but they also wanted to involve the Bay Area community in a tangible way. So they installed large, interactive posters -- in places like bus shelters, food trucks, and restaurants -- that locals could use to vote for a cause.

With the help of the online voting integration -- and a branded hashtag: #GoogleImpactChallenge -- the campaign ended up generating 400,000 votes over the course of about three and a half weeks.



GETTY IMAGES PRESENTS

Image Credit: Getty Images / YouTube

- Campaign: The Non Silent Film
- Brand: Getty Images
- Creative: AlmapBBDO & Punch Audio

STEAL THIS:

- If you're going to invest a lot of resources into a campaign, be sure to have a value-packed promotion plan to extend the reach. This particular campaign was accompanied by reimagined movie posters, a timeline of production, a file list from the film, and more.

Over the years, Getty Images has made a name for itself as one of the most popular destinations for royalty-free stock imagery.

But did you know Getty also offers stock music and sound effects?

To raise awareness for their expansive library of other stock offerings, the folks at Getty Images decided to show instead of tell.

The brand partnered with Brazil-based agency, AlmapBBDO, to recreate the classic 1922 silent film, Nosferatu, in a ... well ... not so silent way.

The reimagined film set the classic visuals to a soundtrack composed entirely of Getty Images' stock audio.

The end result? A fresh, innovative twist on a classic - and a shareable way for Getty Images to showcase the power of its audio files.



Arts & Entertainment



Image Credit: 29rooms.com

- Campaign: 29 Rooms
- Brand & Creative: Refinery29 and Various Partners

STEAL THIS:

- People spend a lot of time in front of screens these days. That's why being able to interact with a brand in person is something we now crave. If you really want to connect with your audience, consider switching up the medium by bringing your digital content to life in some way.

The popular digital media and entertainment company, Refinery29, gave a whole new meaning to experiential marketing when it launched "29 Rooms": an interactive exhibition for the senses.

Refinery29 gave non-profit organizations and companies, that would otherwise have trouble getting out in front of the Instagram-minded-millennials, the opportunity to do so by sponsoring one of its 29 rooms.

Each of the rooms were designed differently and meant to be explored. Experiences ranged from Casper filling a room with over 150 pillows for people to play on and take photos with, to Aldo creating a runway and encouraged people to let their inner model shine.

While attendees knew the purpose of these rooms was to advertise the brand, they were able to get lost in the fun of it all thanks to the clever execution.



Payback's a Wench

#ROASTJOFFREY

Image Credit: AdAge

- Campaign: #RoastJoffery
- Brand: Game of Thrones
- Creative: 360i

STEAL THIS:

- Give people a reason to come together around a common passion point, whether it be something they love or hate. The beauty of promoting something like this on social media is it give the participant the option to give as much or as little as they feel comfortable sharing.

Joffrey Baratheon, let us count the ways we hate thee.

In an effort to drum up some engagement during the *Game of Thrones* off season, HBO launched its first "internet roast." The network asked fans (and haters) to let all that built up anger towards Baratheon out on their favorite social media platform. The roast was launched across Facebook, Twitter, Vine, and Instagram -- and featured multiple celebrity "roasters."

HBO released a video that explained how to join in on the fun using the hashtag #RoastJoffrey. In just 48 hours, Baratheon received over 60,000 messages. What kind of name is Joffery, anyway? #roastjoffrey



Image Credit: Adweek

- Campaign: A Taste of the Gilmore Life
- Brand & Creative: Netflix

STEAL THIS:

- Snapchat filters are a great way for brands to join conversations consumers are already having. If you are having a photo-worthy event, why not let your brand get in on the fun?

- These days, people are interacting with brands in a physical space less and less. As a result, it's less common for a brand to come to life, making experiential marketing an interesting and valuable play.

For one day, Gilmore Girl fans were able to have a taste, quite literally, of what it'd be like to share a cup of coffee with their favorite Stars Hollow residents.

Netflix partnered with more than 200 coffee shops and bakeries around the country to promote the series reboot by converting them into Luke's Diner -- the Gilmore's favorite coffee haunt. Throughout the day, servers (outfitted in Luke's famous flannel shirt and a backwards baseball hat) handed out free cups of coffee.

Each coffee cup donned a Snapcode (Snapchat's version of a QR code) that unlocked a special Gilmore Girls filter -- available for just one hour after being unlocked.

Signs in the participating shops encouraged fans to take a selfie with the coffee cup and tag who they'd be watching the reboot of the popular show with.

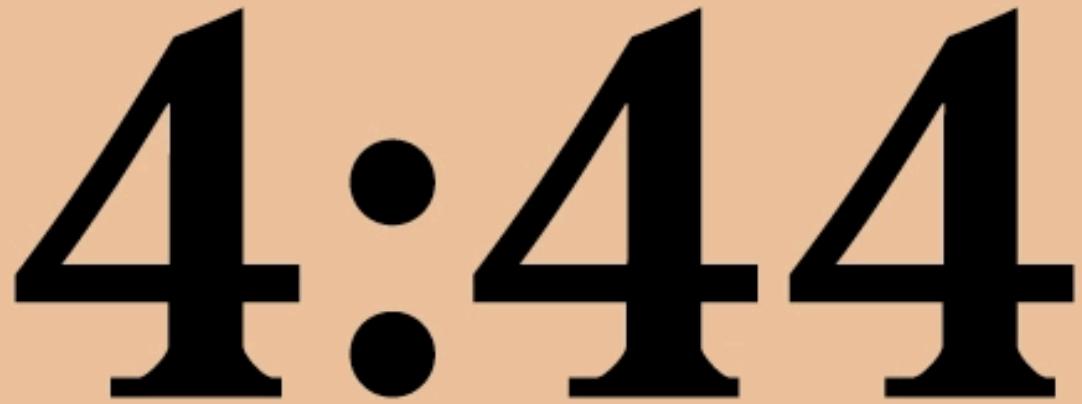


Image Credit: Tidal

- Campaign: 4:44
- Artist: Jay-Z
- Creative: Outfront Media

STEAL THIS:

- It is our nature to want to give the consumer as much information as possible to make a decision. However, sometimes, given the right circumstances, withholding information can actually make the public want more and help you build buzz. Remember: People like the thrill of the hunt and the reward at the end.

When banner ads displaying the mysterious code "4:44" began popping up on various music websites, it started to raise some eyebrows.

The more suspicious part? The ads didn't direct you anywhere, though the source code revealed yet another code: "tidal- 444."

That's when Jay-Z fans took note, as Tidal is the name of the rapper's premium streaming service.

Shortly after the ads launched, an outside advertising campaign rolled out featuring the same "4:44" graphic. What's more, one of the ads was placed at the "Jay St" subway stop in NYC. For fans, that confirmed it: an album launch was surely in the works.

When Jay-Z finally released the album, he was met with 800K+ tweets overnight.

Disney
PRINCESS

DREAM BIG, PRINCESS.



Image Credit: Disney

- Campaign: #DreamBigPrincess
- Brand: Disney
- Creative: Disney & 15 global photographers

STEAL THIS:

- Empowering your audience is a great way to create brand loyalty.
- Collaborative campaigns turn passive marketing and advertising into an actionable experience.

Disney did it again. Known for its inspirational and impressive campaigns, Disney partnered with 15 photographers around the world to create a series of images highlighting real, inspirational women and girls.

The media conglomerate also invited the public to get in on the curation using the hashtag #DreamBigPrincess on Instagram. For every photo posted, Disney would donate \$1 to the **United Nations Foundation's Girl Up**.

It wasn't long before it hit the goal of \$1M.

Disney also made a point to localize the hashtags for the campaign to ensure inclusivity. Global variations included:

- #soyprincesasiendoyo
- #souprincesasoureal
- #GlaubeAnDichPrinzessin
- & more!



Retail & Ecommerce



Image Credit: Lacoste / Instagram

- Campaign: Save the Species
- Brand & Creative: Lacoste & IUCN

STEAL THIS:

- If businesses want to keep up with modern consumer demands, social responsibility has to be part of the conversation. It's never too late to start making a difference - and rallying your audience around a cause can be extremely powerful.

To kick off a three-year partnership with the International Union for Conservation of Nature, Lacoste temporarily traded in its signature crocodile logo for 10 endangered species. This logo swap marks the first time in history that the brand has changed its logo.

Proceeds from the polo sales were used to help the IUCN and Lacoste fight for wildlife conservation worldwide.

The limited-edition polos sold out almost instantly after being announced at Paris Fashion Week 2018.

Needless to say, this campaign serves as an excellent example of how to combine creativity with a cause to highlight your brand values and earn the respect of an extended audience.



Image Credit: Allbirds / YouTube

- Campaign: Tree Collection
- Brand: Allbirds
- Creative: Opinionated

STEAL THIS:

- Allbirds does a great job crafting marketing and advertising messages that help customers connect with the brand through simple shared values. If you want to foster deeper connections with your audience, start by defining a set of guiding values and principles that can be used to inform your larger brand message.

Light. Breezy. Tree. Shoe.

Those are the only four words used in the latest video ads from Allbirds – and that's really all you need to know.

The wildly successful shoe company partnered with the Portland-based agency, Opinionated, to craft a series of quick and quirky ads to get the word out about its latest sustainable material: eucalyptus tree fibers.

The ads are intended to elicit feelings of comfort and simplicity to reinforce the brand's commitment to creating shoes that you can feel good about wearing.

While it may seem overly straightforward, the ads serve as a great reminder that sometimes less is more.

#missadventure

shop the film:
starry nights

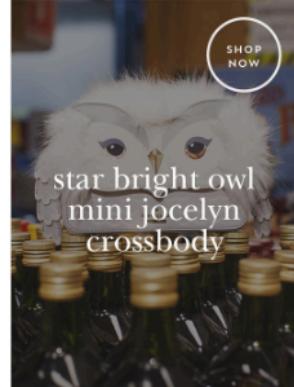


Image Credit: Katespade.com

- Campaign: #missadventure
- Brand: Kate Spade
- Creative: Cinematique & Google (shoppable video)

STEAL THIS:

- When brainstorming content, think about what you can do to actively involve the viewer or reader in the experience.
- Strive for content that lowers the barrier between your prospect and the action they must take to become a customer.

Shoppable content, like the #missadventure video series from Kate Spade, brilliantly simplifies the purchasing process by inviting the consumer in for an immersive experience.

Rather than passively watching branded video content, the #missadventure series presents Kate Spade products through entertaining stories about "interesting women leading interesting lives."

The videos star fan favorites like Anna Kendrick, Zosia Mamet, and Lola Kirke, which amplifies the credibility of the brand and the hilarity of each "missadventure."

The content was also repurposed on the Kate Spade website, where items were available for purchase below the star-studded video.

When you got that new watch and have to show it off



Me: i need to 2 start saving money 4 the future
gets paid



Image Credit: @meatwreck & @polynor

- Campaign: #TFWGucci
- Brand: Gucci
- Creative: Various meme creators

STEAL THIS:

- If you want to reengage a particular segment of your audience or expand your audience into a new market, consider meeting those people where they already are - like Gucci did here by joining millennials on Instagram.

- Humor is a smart tactic for businesses in highly-competitive or saturated industries. Letting your personality shine helps to differentiate you from everyone else in your lane.

Memes: They are a dime a dozen these days -- but people are still finding them as entertaining as ever.

For that reason, Gucci took advantage of this trend to promote their new line of luxury watches. In an effort to create excitement amongst a younger demographic that could afford their products, the brand launched a collaborative Instagram-based campaign along with a supporting microsite.

The campaign leveraged the hashtag #TFWGucci (That Feeling When Gucci) where Gucci posted memes they created and encouraged the public to submit one's they created, too.

The result was an online gallery of perfectly curated Gucci pictures, both beautiful and funny, featuring their new line of watches.

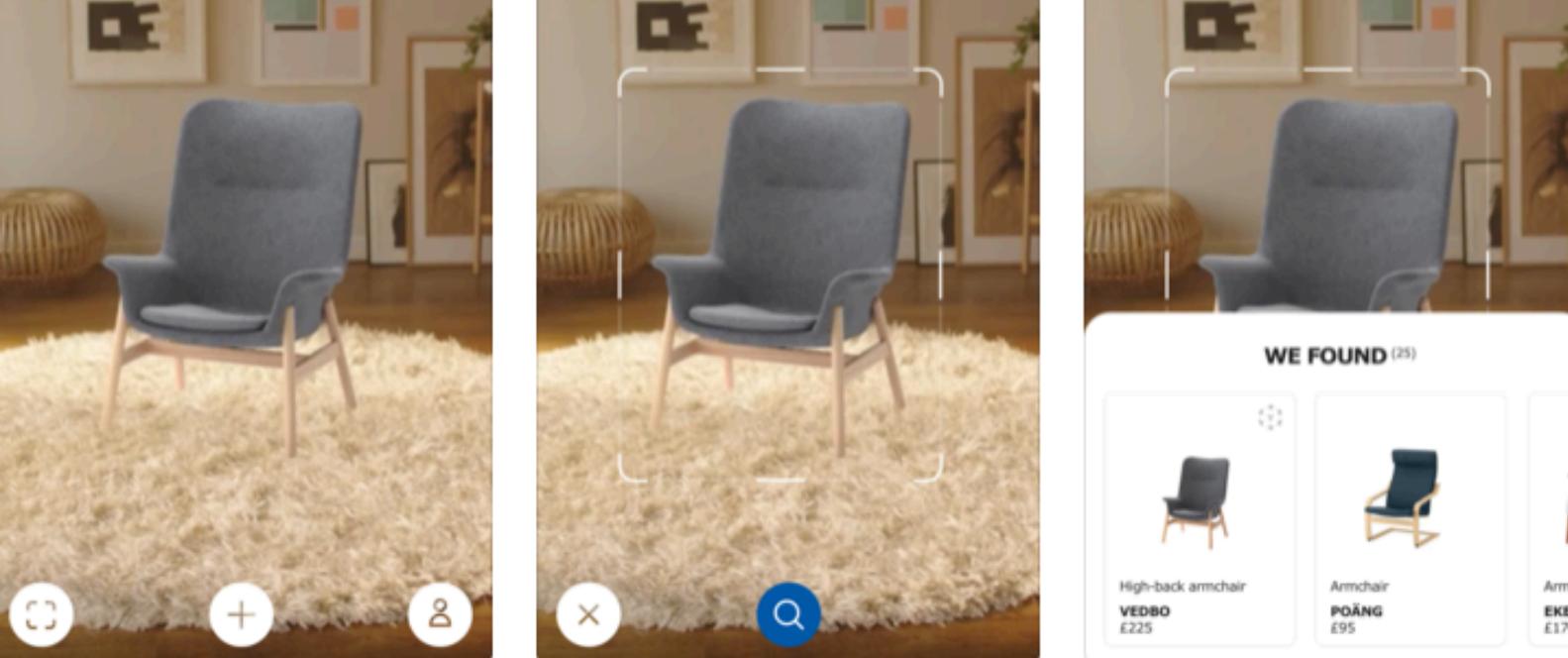


Image Credit: Ikea

- Campaign: Ikea Place
- Brand: Ikea
- Creative: 72 and Sunny, Amsterdam

Ikea is using augmented reality to help seal the deal with potential customers by allowing them to preview how furniture would look in their very own homes via their smartphones.

The app shows customers over 2,000 different pieces of furniture as 3D renderings, from any angle, in the preferred room of their choice in their home.

If they decide on a piece that suits their needs, they can buy directly from the app.

Ikea is one of the first home furnishing brands that is making this technology available to the masses.

STEAL THIS:

- Buyer's remorse is a very real thing -- especially after a purchase with a big price tag. Give consumers the reassurance they need that they will be happy with their purchase.



Food & Drink



TACO  BELL



•  OpenTable®

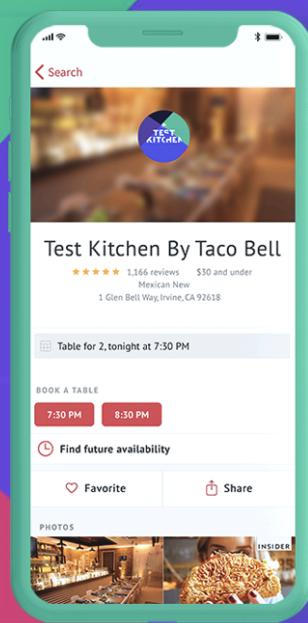


Image Credit: Lookwhatwedid.co

- Campaign: Test Kitchen by Taco Bell
- Brand & Creative: Taco Bell x Open Table

STEAL THIS:

- Exclusivity drives fast action and increases demand. Give it a try by incorporating a level of #FOMO (fear of missing out) into your next campaign.

- Don't underestimate the power of a good co-marketing or co-branding partner. It's a great way to get your brand in front of new eyes.

Taco Bell is no stranger to clever marketing campaigns, but opening up its exclusive test kitchen with the help of Open Table tops the list.

In honor of National Taco Day, Taco Bell hosted a five-course dinner featuring some of its top chefs and creators. An exclusive group of fellow taco lovers were able to make a reservation via Open Table to attend the event at the brand's headquarters in Irvine California.

But the events didn't stop there – Taco Bell released several other dates to let more fans join in on the fun.

The campaign spread fast, resulting in over 323 million media impressions, with zero media buy.

zoom in on the syrup



4:47 PM - 1 Mar 2017



Image Credit: Denny's Twitter

- Campaign: Zoom in
- Brand & Creative: Denny's & Erwin Penland

STEAL THIS:

- Let the conversation you are having with consumers reflect how you want them to feel when they think of you. Do you want them to feel like they are talking to a friend? Or would you prefer they think of you as a trusted, professional partner? Use the answers to those questions to define the way you communicate and engage your audience.

Instead of posting simple pictures of its food, Denny's took to Twitter and led viewers on a scavenger hunt of sorts. The diner-style chain posted a picture and told viewers to "zoom in on the syrup."

Once they zoomed in, it continued to give them other instructions to follow. The final message being, "has this distracted you from overwhelming existential dread lol."

Who knew Denny's was so deep?

While the messages had nothing to do with pancakes, or anything really for that matter, it got the attention of hundreds of thousands of people.

As of June 2018, over a year since it was posted, the original tweet has amassed over 118K retweets and nearly 170K Likes.

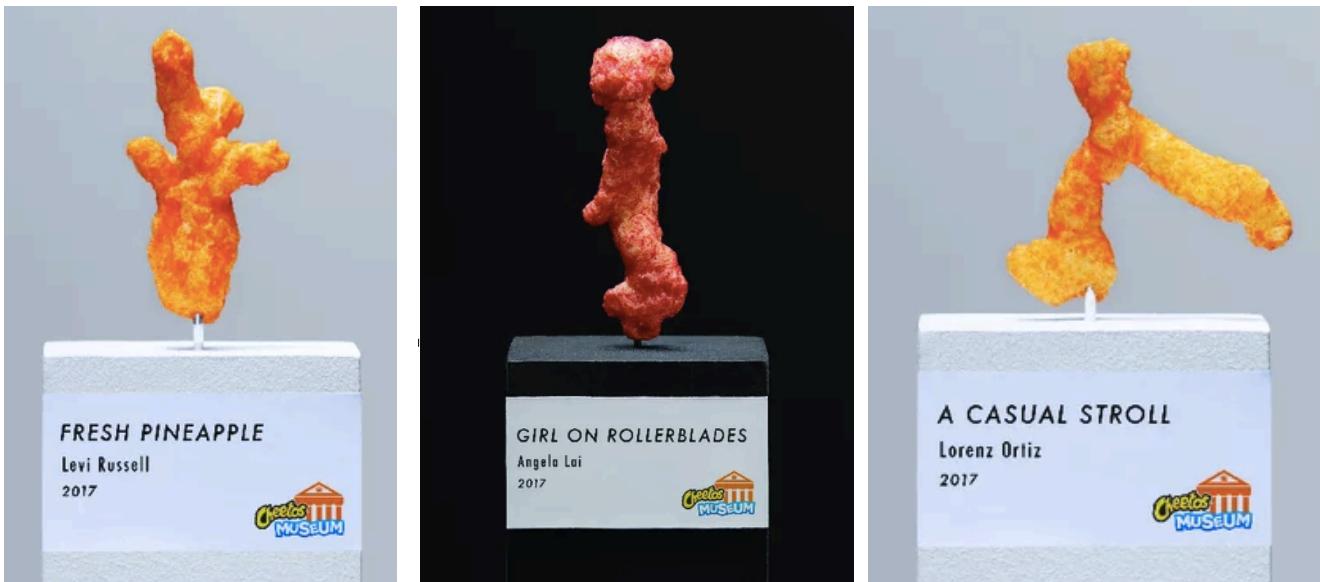


Image Credit The Cheetos Brand

- Campaign: Cheetos Museum
- Brand: Cheetos
- Creative: Goodby Silverstein & Partners

Cheetos was inspired by an interesting social media trend they were seeing of people posting pictures of Cheetos in unique shape, like dinosaurs or giraffes. Someone had even started a full Instagram account decided to the wonders.

STEAL THIS:

- See what people are already saying about your brand online and join in on the conversation. If people are already talking about it, chances are you are setting yourself up for success.

- If you sell a product or products, give people another reason to purchase. For example, you might offer an entry into a contest in exchange for a purchase.

The brand saw the consumer behavior and wanted to join in on the fun. Cheetos encouraged people to buy a bag and see what shapes they could find in it. And that is when the Cheetos museum was born -- a digital platform where people could see and vote on what they thought was the most impressive Cheeto shape, and submit their own.

The campaign received thousands of media placements and [recorded its strongest week in sales](#), ever, while the campaign was running.



Image Credit Ogilvy Melbourne / YouTube

- Campaign: 360-degree Easter Egg Hunt
- Brand: Cadbury
- Creative: Ogilvy Melbourne & Alt.vfx Sydney

With the help of Ogilvy Melbourne and Alt.vfx Sydney, Cadbury was able to deliver a little Easter magic and a touch of nostalgia to its Australian market.

Using 360-degree video on Facebook, the brand invited its audience to participate in a virtual egg hunt, attracting over 220K visitors.

Those who were the first to comment the location of an egg in the digital experience were rewarded with real Cadbury treats.

Thanks to the creativity and playfulness of the campaign, visitor engagement was at an all time high: at the end of the one-hour stream, the video had amassed over 70K comments.

STEAL THIS:

- Tapping into a nostalgic memory - like childhood Easter egg hunts - is a great way to elicit an emotional response from your audience.

- Don't underestimate the power of innovation. While new technologies can be intimidating, taking a chance on an emerging format can have a major impact on your brand's reputation.



Image Credit: YouTube / Bud Light

- Campaign: Dilly Dilly!
- Brand: Bud Light
- Creative: Wieden + Kennedy

STEAL THIS:

- Drop a little bait and give consumers something they can take ownership of. The more they own it, the more fun they will have with it.
- Don't be afraid to let go and be a little silly -- as long as it suits your brand. Sometimes the best campaigns stem from taking a risk.

Bud Light's infamous "Dilly Dilly!" Super Bowl LII commercial was equal parts good timing and good fun. The medieval setting for the "trilogy" of commercials was well-received by Game of Thrones fans, who felt an instant connection to the content. That familiarity, mixed with the sheer catchiness of a tagline like "dilly dilly," helped the commercial become a pop culture success.

It was only a matter of time before sportscasters were pulling the phrase into broadcasts, athletes were dropping it on the field and in interviews, and apparel companies began recognizing an increased demand for "dilly dilly" merch.

In January 2018, Bud Light [reported brand metrics to Adweek](#) highlighting the positive impact the campaign had, including:

- Over 2 billion earned media impressions
- 300K monthly Google searches for "Dilly Dilly"



Thanks for reading.

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