



North America 2020

Activation Casebook

The North America 2020 Activation Casebook

18 case studies on the most important US and Canadian activations from the world's most innovative brands



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Product Manager
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What is this report?

This report – the very first North America Activation Casebook from SportBusiness Sponsorship – brings together 18 case studies on our pick of the region's most interesting and innovative sponsorship activations from approximately the last 12 months.

Each of our case studies takes an activation produced by a brand and a rights-holder and explains the objectives of the campaign, details the practical elements of the activation and reports the outcomes.

In this collection, look out for brands leveraging US sport's post-Covid-19 return to action, like 'The Return', page 32, or 'Take Me Out' on page 38. And a word on the quality of ABInBev creative – the brand has no fewer than four campaigns examined in this report (and it could have been more!), from 'Drink Wiser' – a fantastic example of how to run a responsible drinking campaign – to the clever inversion of 'Future Official' and the rapid-reaction 'Not All Heroes Wear Capes'.

Who is it for?

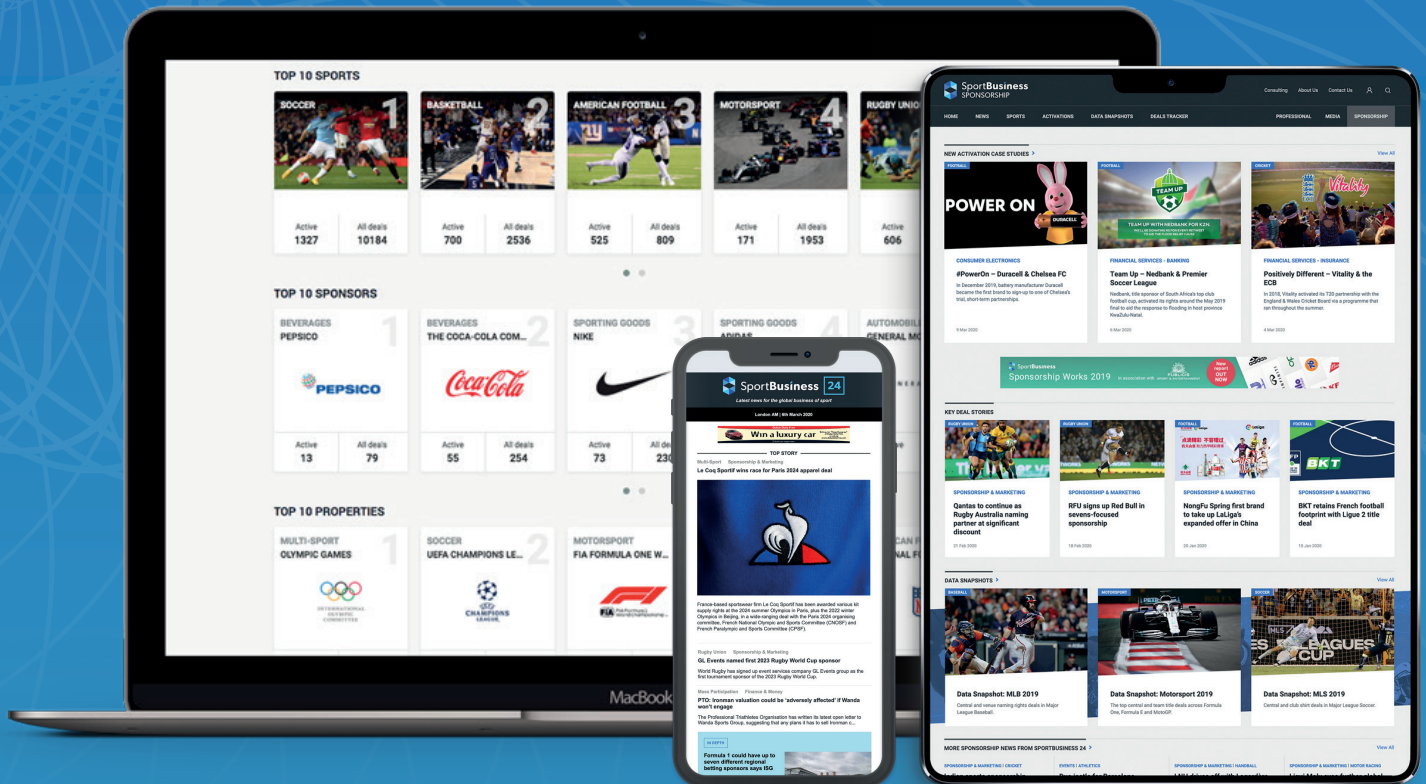
Our case studies are designed to help SportBusiness Sponsorship subscribers identify activation best practice, generate ideas for their own activations and stay up to date with the latest trends.

In bringing case studies of the most important activations together in region-focused reports, we want to help brands that want to see what top-class activations look like in the regions and sports they care about, creative agencies looking for inspiration and to see their good work celebrated, and rights-holders looking for ideas to bring to the table with their current and prospective sponsors.

As ever – to the rights-holders, creative agencies and brands: we want to hear about your activations. If you've made something worth shouting about, we'd be delighted to cover it – reach me directly at richard.welbirg@sportbusiness.com



SportBusiness SPONSORSHIP



Giving agencies, brands & rights-holders true added value through sponsorship deal data, activation campaign case studies and daily news

THE SPONSORSHIP PACKAGE

ACTIVATION CASE STUDIES

Each of our case studies takes an activation campaign and sets out objectives, details what was involved and reports the outcomes. We publish 24 case studies every month.

DATA SNAPSHOTS

Each month, we publish a data snapshot of a key sponsorship market. These bring you benchmark values on every single deal in the rights-holder portfolios & written insights helping you understand these markets.

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Four times a year, we round up the most innovative activations examined in our case studies into definitive best practice casebooks.

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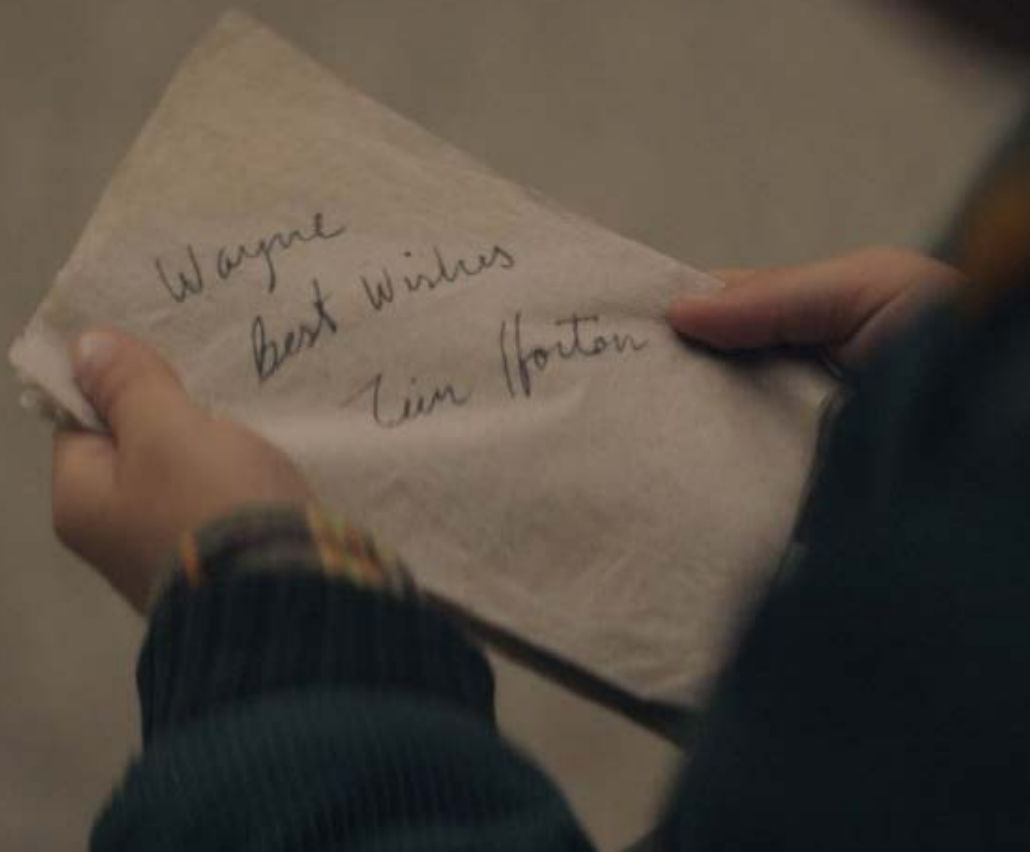
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The Autograph/Tim's True Story – Tim Hortons & Hockey Canada

Launched to drive awareness of Canadian coffee chain Tim Horton's enhanced partnership with Hockey Canada – and generally celebrate the 2019-20 hockey season – the campaign linked the brand to Canadian legend Wayne Gretzky.

Tim Hortons is a major and long-time hockey sponsor: an official partner of the NHL plus Canadian NHL teams the Montreal Canadiens, Toronto Maple Leafs, Calgary Flames, the Vancouver Canucks, Ottawa Senators, Edmonton Oilers and the Winnipeg Jets, as well as the Canadian Women's Hockey League, the Canada Hockey League and the Hockey Hall of Fame and Hockey Canada.

In December 2019, the brand announced an enhanced relationship with Hockey Canada – the national governing body. Building on the existing partnership led by Tim Horton's title sponsorship of

the 'Timbits Initiation Programme' for under-sevens, the new deal saw the brand become Hockey Canada's fourth premier marketing partner.

Other organisations: OPC (production), Cosmo Street Editorial (editorial and online)

Objectives

The objective was to drive awareness of the enhanced partnership and reinforce Tim Hortons' hockey heritage at a time the 2019-20 ice hockey season was getting underway.

Activation

The campaign was spearheaded by a hero commercial highlighting the links between Tim Horton himself and the NHL's (and Canadian hockey's) greatest star.

'The Autograph', developed in harness with Gut Agency, tells the true story of a chance meeting in 1968 between the young Gretzky and chain founder Tim Horton, whose legendary NHL career was at the time winding down.

The campaign was initially socially teased in movie-style release promos.

The spearhead commercial was first broadcast on national television in Canada on December 12, during a telecast of the IIHF Ice Hockey World Junior Championships, and debuted on Tim Horton's digital and social channels on the same date.

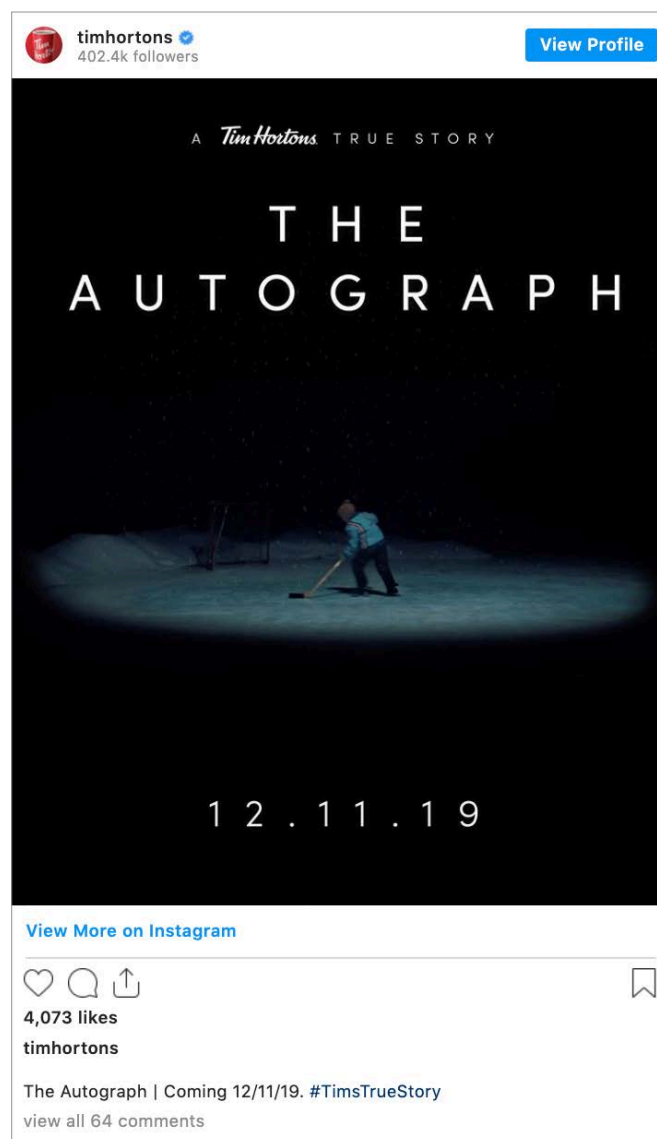
It was supported by additional social content carrying the hashtags [#TimsTrueStory](#) and [#TheBeginningOfSomethingGreat](#).

A second phase of the campaign began on 15 January, when customers at Tim Hortons restaurants across Canada were served drinks in limited-edition tumblers featuring The Great One's autograph and iconic number 99.

The campaign was developed for Tim Hortons regional president Axel Schwan, chief marketing officer Paloma Azulay, and head of integrated marketing communications Jana Goodbaum by an agency team led by founder Anselmo Ramos and chief operating officer Paulo Fogaça.

Outcome

As well as reaching the audience watching the Canadian team playing at the IIHF Ice Hockey World Junior Championships on TSN, the hero commercial notched up 158,000 views on Tim Horton's YouTube channel and a further 100,000 views on its Facebook page.





Player appears courtesy of the National Basketball Players Association

Call Your Shot – Carmax & the National Basketball Players Association

To promote its new personalised delivery service, US used car retailer CarMax penned a partnership with the NBPA for an autumn/winter campaign led by a series of TV ads, social spots and surprise stunts.

Objectives

CarMax briefed The Martin Agency to create a blended national and local market campaign to drive awareness of its new personalised online services, which included scheduling vehicle delivery, booking test drives and completing the entire car-buying process from home.

Activation

The marketing team's solution to the national/local challenge was to leverage the start of the new NBA season through a partnership with the NBPA, which

enabled the agency to select a team of five current and former NBA players whose nationwide reputation and team-related local connections could meet the challenge.

This led to 'Call Your Shot', a campaign fronted by a strong, all-court line-up of basketball talent in the form of Chris Bosh, Seth Curry, Zach Levine, Kelly Oubre Jr. and Justise Winslow.

The campaign, which primarily ran on social media but also included national and local TV ad buys, saw each player front one or more spots in an early season video series. Each individual spot includes a reference to each specific athlete ambassador's basketball skills and careers, superstitions and facts, all linked through comic pivots to how people can now buy a car with CarMax 'on their own terms' by literally 'calling their shot'.

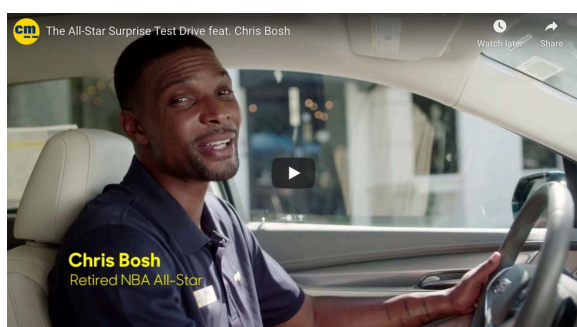
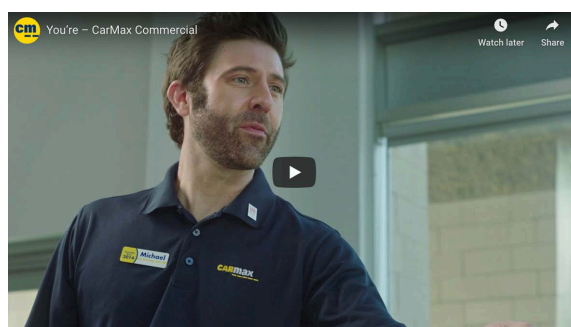
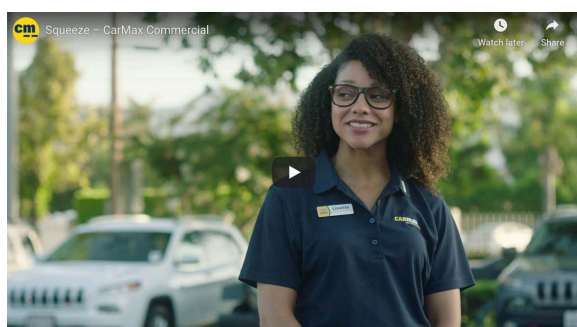
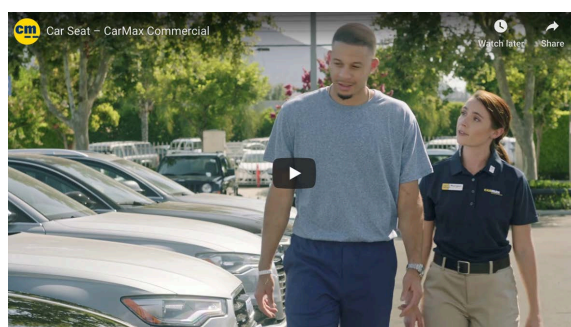
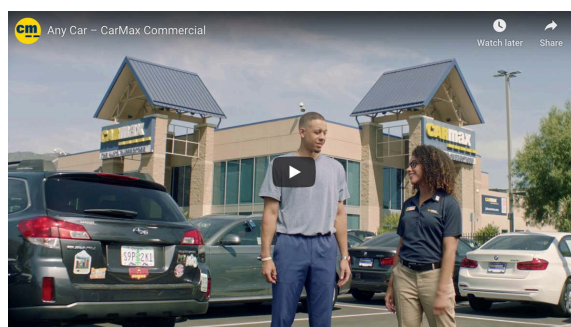
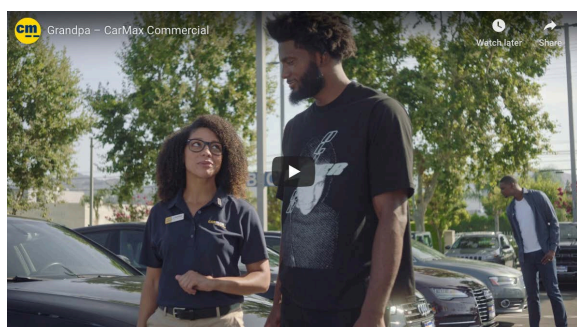
For NBA fans, there are plenty of partially hidden basketball related winks and nods relating to each endorser (such as Zach Lavine's candy sock, Chris Bosh's time playing the Toronto Raptors and Curry's trade from Portland to Dallas).

As well as the core set of spots, Bosh (in Miami) and Curry (in Dallas) took local area customers on a surprise test drive experience. Bosh surprises recently retired Miami schoolteacher Ella Hightower after she used the new platform to order a test drive delivered

to her home, while Curry surprises super fan Theo at his home and says we are 'catching him on his side job'.

Outcome

Since the first teasers were posted on 15 October 2019, the video series generated more than 3.2 million views on the brand's own YouTube channel, with the most watched spots being those starring Seth Curry (1.5m) and Zach Levine (1m).





Crucial Catch – CHI Franciscan/Virginia Mason & the Seattle Seahawks

The 2019-20 'Crucial Catch to Intercept Cancer' campaign saw several NFL teams work with their healthcare partners to prevent cancer through early detection.

The Atlanta Falcons worked with Emory Healthcare and the New York Giants with Meridian Health, but it was the Seahawks' dual partnership with hospital organisations CHI Franciscan and Virginia Mason – together covering 11 hospitals in the Pacific Northwest – that spearheaded the campaign and led to the broadest activation.

Objectives

The campaigns aims were:

- Raise money for cancer research
- Make it easier for fans to get screenings
- Teach fans about the importance of early detection.

Activation

Working with specialist sports/health agency Bendigo, the campaign was designed to go beyond the standard charity activations – such as single-day fundraisers and in-stadium signage – to create a true partnership and ambassadorial programme.

It used current Seahawks players, team alumni and coaches to front content, events and experiences aimed at inspiring Seahawks fans to make an appointment, share a story or make an online donation – and then share their experience of the initiative with friends and family.

The content – aimed initially at boosting awareness and later at driving traffic to landing pages offering a range of cancer related services – spanned TV, radio and print advertising (through media partnerships), plus digital and mascot appearances during the weeks leading up to the October 20 home game

between the Seahawks and the Baltimore Ravens.

The creative included video, interviews on local news and talks shows featuring medical staff from the two hospitals, plus outdoor posters and moving signage, as well as print ads.

Straightforward print executions used football and Seahawks imagery blended with football-related wordplays and more direct copy asking: “Are you ready to make a crucial catch?”

Short body copy mentioned the two hospitals, the Seahawks and the American Cancer Society, and encouraged readers to get cancer screenings for breast, cervical, colon, lung, prostate and skin cancers.

A radio spot voiced by the Seahawks official stadium announcer Steve Raible took a similarly straightforward approach, while TV and digital spots featured cancer patients sharing emotional experiences and promoting screening with clinicians, football players and fans in the stands and watching on TV sets as the audience.

The promotion also attracted corporate support from water brand Dasani and ridesharing company Lyft.

On game day, activation strands included in-arena ground teams and signage as well as an on-field ceremony.

“It’s really a lift when we can get our patients and our employees face to face with players that they revere. [The results] are well beyond what we would expect from a traditional sports arrangement,”

explained Kerry Shannon, senior vice-president of Strategy and Business Development at [Virginia Mason](#).

“Big strong guys get up and tell the most tender stories about what’s occurred with their mom, or loved one, or about somebody who’s struggling with cancer. What that does to lift patients is remarkable. Our doctors and other providers and employees come back, and they’re changed by those experiences.”

Outcome

Bendigo estimated the campaign generated earned media exposure worth between \$100,000 and \$160,000, and the hospital groups split \$20,000 raised through the sale of Seahawks-related merchandise.

CHI Franciscan chief strategy officer Tom Kruse said: “We know that we drove about 100 patients directly to a dedicated [CHI Franciscan] landing site. Those are patients we’re going to track longitudinally, trying to see if we did catch some patients early. If one patient catches an early-stage cancer, that’s well worth any investment we make.”

And Virginia Mason’s Shannon added: “There’s no way to do this with 100 percent precision, but it looks like we had about 21,000 engagements as a result of this – people who clicked through to Virginia Mason.”

The two hospital organisations and the Seahawks plan to repeat the program in the 2020-21 season.





DRINK WISER HYDRATE BETWEEN BUDS

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Drink Wiser – Budweiser & the NBA

November 2019 saw Budweiser celebrate the extension of its NBA official beer partnership with a responsible drinking campaign fronted by LA Lakers star Danny Green.

Objective

Drink Wiser, Budweiser's umbrella responsible drinking platform launched in 2018, has one mission: get people to drink water between Buds.

For the 2019 festive season, the ABInBev brand sought a campaign for the platform that would also leverage the recent extension of its official partnership with the NBA.

It also wanted to take advantage of its 2018 tie up with the NBA Players Association and the rule change that enable US alcohol marketing to involve active athletes.

The NBA is traditionally the busiest of the major US sports leagues over the festive period and 'owns' Christmas Day sports with a slate of high-profile games.

Activation

Working with agency PrayTell, the NBA and the NBAPA, Budweiser's marketers teamed up with LA Lakers shooting guard Danny Green to champion for an integrated initiative spanning PR, on-pack (with the 'Drink Wiser' message featured on all Budweiser primary and secondary packaging), TV, online and on-screen in NBA arenas across the USA and Canada.

The creative was spearheaded by a hero spot called 'Daydreaming', which set out to change the way NBA fans think about 'smart drinking' by showing that the key to being legendary on and off the court

is to 'Drink Wiser'.

It launched online and on television in late November and aired during NBA television coverage throughout the festive period.

[Anheuser-Busch Drinkwiser Spot](#) from [Praytell](#) on [Vimeo](#).

The campaign also included 'The Drink Wiser Challenge' run, in conjunction with YouTube TV, across Budweiser primary and secondary packaging. It offered basketball fans a chance to win NBA Finals tickets, signed basketball memorabilia and Budweiser prizes.

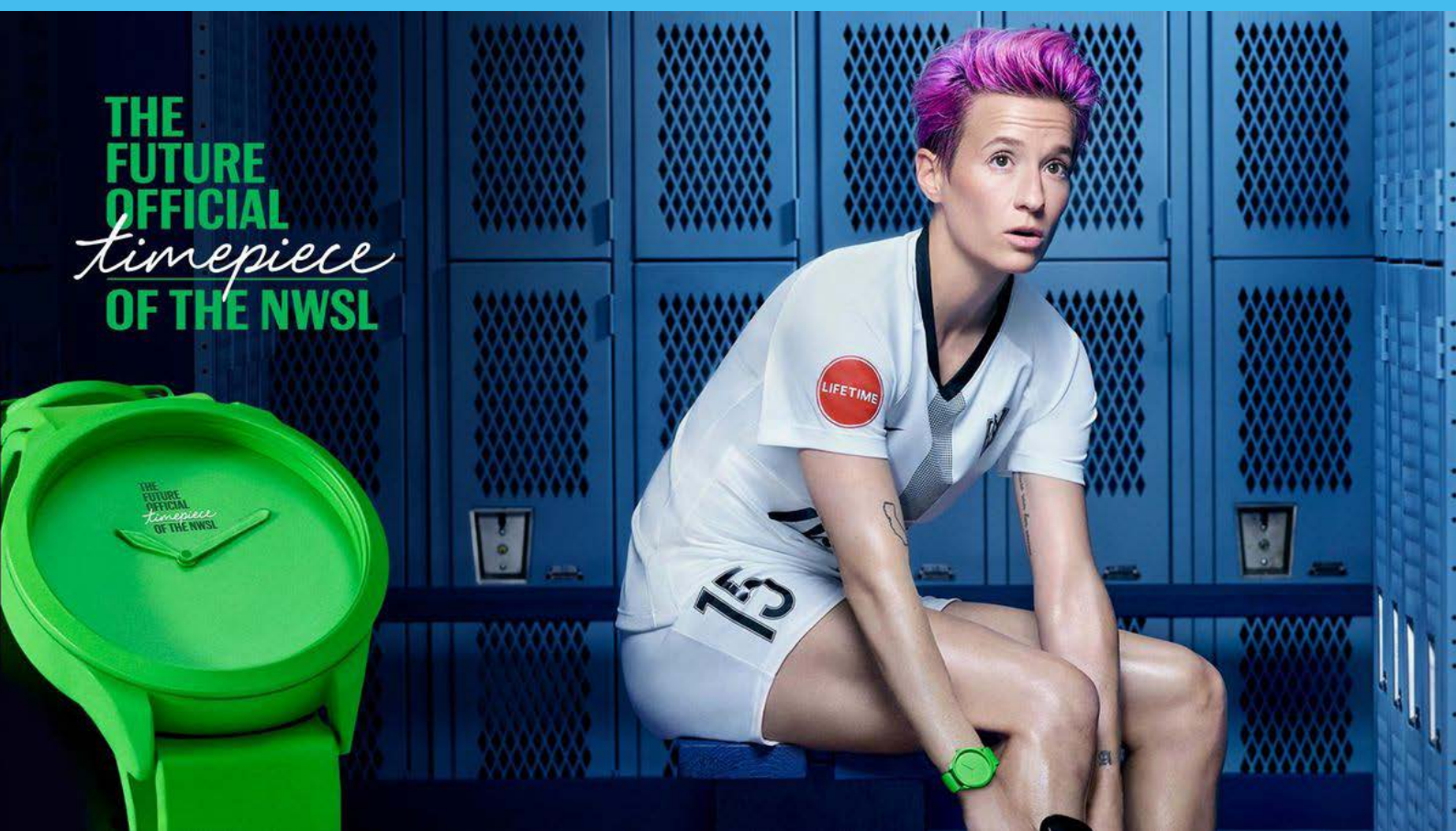
Outcome

The campaign was widely covered by a range of US media outlets including CNBA, Ask Men, Fansided and Good Morning America.

Among its key online metrics were:

- 34 media placements
- 49 million media impressions
- 727 social conversations
- 77,000 Twitter views and 150,000 Instagram views of the hero video.





Future Official... – Budweiser & the National Women's Soccer League

In October 2019 Budweiser leveraged its NWSL sponsorship through a Megan Rapinoe- fronted campaign that aimed to solicit new sponsors for the US women's professional league.

Objectives

When Budweiser became the NWSL's official beer sponsors in July 2019, the league had only four other sponsors – Nike, Lifetime, Cutter and Thorne – while MLS boasts [two dozen](#).

Thus, a campaign was devised to drum up corporate support by showing the benefits of the partnership.

For the brand, the primary objective was to continue to drive awareness of the new NWSL sponsorship and position the brand as a champion of gender equality.

It followed the brand's partnership launch campaign – [#WontStopWatching](#) – which sought to increase live match attendance and TV audiences and boost the profile of the NWSL's teams and players.

Activation

Working with agency VaynerMedia, Budweiser's call-to-action to other brands cast national team star and Reign FC skipper Megan Rapinoe in ads running across multiple channels urging other companies to become partners in sundry categories such as official deodorant, official restaurant and official timepiece.

The activation was spearheaded by a Rapinoe-narrated spot, *It's Worth Supporting*, which debuted on ESPN on October 27 during the telecast of the NWSL final between the Chicago Red Stars and the North Carolina Courage.

The cheeky creative approach plays up Rapinoe's indignity at using faux products and consuming fake food when she'd enjoy real meals and merchandise from actual sponsors so much more.

The hero spot was amplified across the brand's social channels and supported by print ads and online content in the style of mock executions for potential sponsors. All minimised Budweiser's own brand presence to promote the cause.

The ads all sought to drive viewers to the bespoke e-commerce site at thefutureofficialsponsor.com, where they could pledge to support future sponsors in a variety of categories.

To try and push uncertain CMOs into making a deal, the online platform gave fans a chance the pre-order future official products of the NWSL even before a sponsor signs on. Users were served with

pop-up invites to tag specific brands they thought should become NWSL sponsors on Facebook and Twitter.

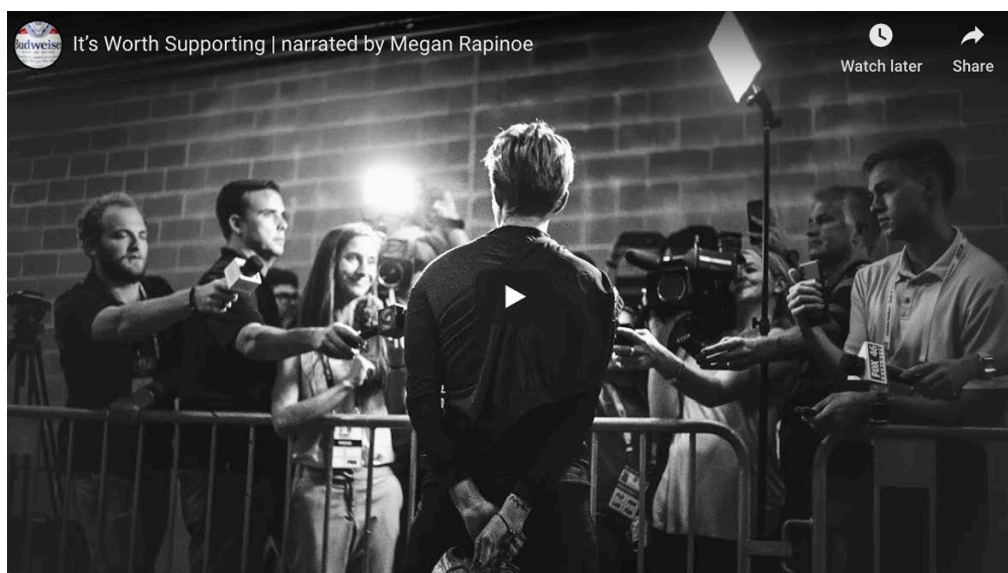
The campaign was created for Budweiser's US chief marketing officer Marcel Marcondes by an agency team led by group creative director Adam Lock and chief production officer Aaron Kovan.

Outcome

The campaign has engaged more than two million people since its 24 October 2019 launch.

The hero video has notched up 1.44 million YouTube views, plus a further 335,000 on Twitter and 172,000 on Facebook.

It has not yet shown success in its secondary objective of driving new corporate sponsorships for the NWSL.





GOALS DRIVE PROGRESS

Goals Drive Progress – Audi & MLS

In July 2019, Audi's American arm launched a new multi-year youth initiative within its MLS activation programme called 'Goals Drive Progress'.

Goals Drive Progress seeks to contribute additional funding to MLS Academies and was promoted through an integrated campaign that spanned fan social participation, broadcaster support and an online video series.

The 2019 season is Audi's fifth as the official automotive partner for MLS and presenting sponsor of the Audi MLS Cup Playoffs.

The car company's central leverage platform is the Audi Player Index: a real-time statistical analysis tool available on the MLS app (and supported across the MLS website, social channels and in broadcast) that tracks every on-ball action with the aim of providing fans with sophisticated data to spark deeper

conversations about the sport

Also in 2019, the car company added new inventory as presenting sponsor of the MLS Cup MVP and official presenting sponsor for the 2019 MLS Golden Boot award.

Objectives

The objective behind 'Goals Drive Progress', the first iteration of which ran from July through to October 2019, is twofold: support the game at elite youth level and elevate the standard of soccer in North America by enhancing the on and off-field experience at these academies and providing long-term benefits for stakeholders including players, parents of athletes, clubs, communities and the league itself.

"Soccer is on the rise in the USA and in support Audi is committing to increasing awareness and

helping develop world-class training facilities for the next generation of soccer stars,” said Loren Angelo, vice-president, Marketing, Audi of America.

“Our mission is to help enable the professional pursuit of young athletes and, in turn help create the highest calibre of play to delight fans.”

Activation

The activation was launched during the festivities around the July 31 MLS All-Star game at Exploria Stadium in Orlando, when an MLS select side took on Spanish club Atlético Madrid.

Audi kicked-off the initiative by committing to donate \$5,000 for every goal scored during the All-Star Game (which Atlético won 3:0) and then \$500 for every goal scored in the regular season, \$2,000 for every goal in the Audi MLS Cup Playoffs (19 October to 10 November) and \$10,000 for every goal in the MLS Cup final itself.

Plus, Audi leveraged its new status as the presenting partner of the Golden Boot competition by pledging an additional \$1,000 per goal for the league’s regular-season top scorer – LA FC’s Carlos Vela, who bagged a league-record 34 goals.

The total commitment was limited to \$1m during 2019.

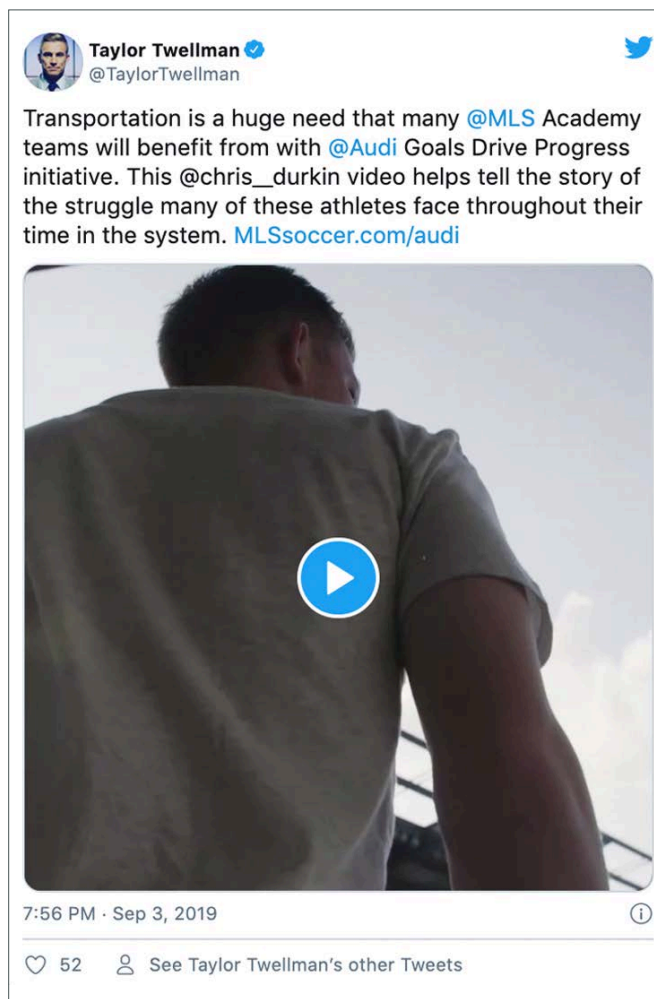
The funds are being used to launch a series of unique programs supporting on- and off-field player education, housing and transportation as well as the launch of Audi Performance Centers.

The Performance Centers are being built at select MLS Academies and equipped with a range of technology, tutorial and educational resources to help enrich off-field academic development. The first Audi Performance Center was opened with Orlando City SC’s in late summer 2019.

USA soccer legend and current ESPN commentator Taylor Twellman joined as an ambassador for the ‘Audi Goals Drive Progress’ program.

Audi also involved fans via the ‘Audi Goals Drive Progress – Fan Face Off’, offering supporters a chance to help make an impact on their own community via social media and a bespoke website at www.gdpfanfaceoff.com.

Each week US and Canadian fans were encouraged to support their own team’s goals by posting a celebratory message on their Twitter and/or Instagram accounts using their teams hashtag and the @audi hashtag, until at the end of the season the team with the highest average fan social posts per game earned an additional \$50,000 for their club’s academy.



A further strand of the campaign saw MLS broadcast partners ESPN, FOX and Univision offered dedicated broadcast and digital integrations to support awareness of the ‘Audi Goals Drive Progress’ programming.

This included programming feature spotlights on MLS Academies and future stars and showcasing the impact of Audi’s contribution to youth and professional soccer.

In terms of fan-facing promotional content, Audi and the MLS also teamed up with Copa90 on a paid partnership based around creating an online video series highlighting the ‘Audi Goals Drive Progress’ program.

The series included a hero film followed by a series of player-specific bio spots.

The initiative also involved Audi dealers nationwide with local activations and dealer engagement experiences in Washington DC, Orlando, Kansas City, Boston, San Jose, Houston, New York, Portland, Salt Lake, Seattle and Colorado Rapids.

Outcome

As well as reaching the season’s 8.7 million live

in-stadium audience and an average audience of 268,000 for each of the 62 televised MLS matches through its broadcast integration partnership through the season, the social content generated more than 750,000 total views, with 50,000 Facebook views of

the hero film alone.

The 1,241 goals scored in the MLS regular season meant Audi quickly reached its maximum \$1m dollar donation pledge.





Shot on iPhone with hockey tape



Hockey Tape (Shot on iPhone) – Apple & the NHL

Late July 2020 saw NHL partner Apple mark the return of hockey after its pandemic shutdown with a campaign called 'Hockey Tape', part of its ongoing 'Shot On iPhone' marketing platform.

Objectives

Apple, an NHL partner since 2017, created an NHL strand of its 'Shot on iPhone' campaign in early 2019. Its aim was offer fans graphically striking, behind-the-scenes glimpses into the daily lives of NHL players: exploring their practice facility habits, pregame routines, post-match rituals and most coveted hockey moments.

When the NHL returned from its Covid-19-enforced break in May 2020, Apple launched a new phase of 'Shot On iPhone' with a brief to create a smile-inducing piece of work about play and camaraderie on the ice.

Activation

The agency's response was a 30-second hero commercial called 'Hockey Tape', which featured a pair of Las Vegas Golden Knights players (Marc-André Fleury and Mark Stone) having on-ice fun with the iPhone 11 Pro.

The ad, which was shot at the SoBe Ice Arena in Las Vegas and posted on Apple Canada's YouTube channel on July 31, references that hockey slang for an assist is 'Apple' and encouraged viewers to 'learn more about iPhone 11 Pro' by clicking through to Apple's website at <https://apple.co/2XdYC1l>

The campaign was further promoted through selected sports-related media partnerships, including one with The Athletic revolving around an interview with Stone that also supported the main campaign by posting exclusive 'making of' video footage.

Outcome

Since it was posted on July 31, the hero spot has generated 2,412,306 views on Apple Canada's YouTube channel, with 4,600 likes.





OFFICIAL SPONSOR OF THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Home is What Unites Us – Lowe's & the NFL

Lowe's had initially planned on simple advertising during the 2020 NFL Draft telecast, but when ESPN approached offering presenting sponsorship of the event (after its original partner pulled out) the retailer saw an opportunity – especially with the event, the players and the fans all confined to their own homes.

While the 2020 Draft was a virtual affair, Lowe's remained open through the pandemic as the home improvement retailer was classed as an essential service.

Objectives

The pandemic forced Lowe's 2020 Draft campaign to take a very different approach to the big-build 'Home Town' fan zone it had rolled out at the 2020 Super Bowl but – according to chief brand and marketing officer Marisa Thalberg, it offered the retailer an

opportunity to take a bold approach that could kick-off a turnaround strategy.

It tasked agency BBDO to create a campaign that told a story of a company that sits at the intersection of home and community, and one that was there to help even, or perhaps especially, during a crisis.

Activation

BBDO's 'Home is what unites us right now' emerged from the reality of coronavirus-enforced lockdown living.

The team developed an activation programme built around two key phases: phase one ran before the Draft and focused on a set of social videos, while phase two revolved around a trio of commercials airing during the telecast of the three-day Draft.

Shooting, producing and edited ads during the

pandemic was itself challenging. New shooting was minimised by using archive footage and existing employee photos, while new shoots used the smallest possible crew.

Phase One

In the week ahead of the Draft, the home improvement retailer brought two leading prospects – Joe Burrow (the Heisman Trophy and National Championship winning LSU quarterback) and Tua Tagovailoa (the much touted University of Alabama quarterback) – together with existing player ambassador Christian McCaffrey (the star running back of the Carolina Panthers) to front a series of surprise 'thank you' video calls to Lowe's staff.

The calls were promoted ahead of the draft across Lowe's own social channels and via the players' Instagram accounts.

Phase Two

These social spots were followed by a set of three

television commercials airing during the official Draft telecast, which all celebrated the comforts of home and reflected disrupted routines and quieter days.

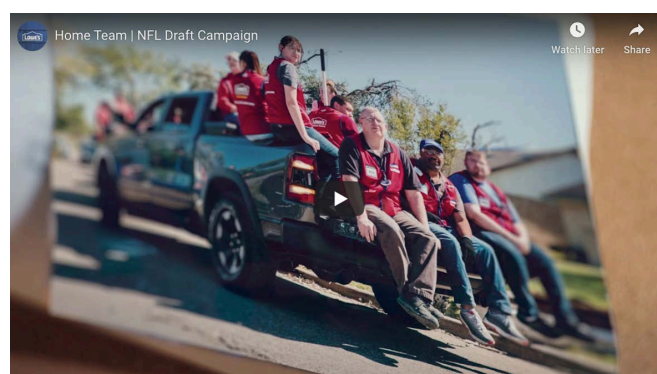
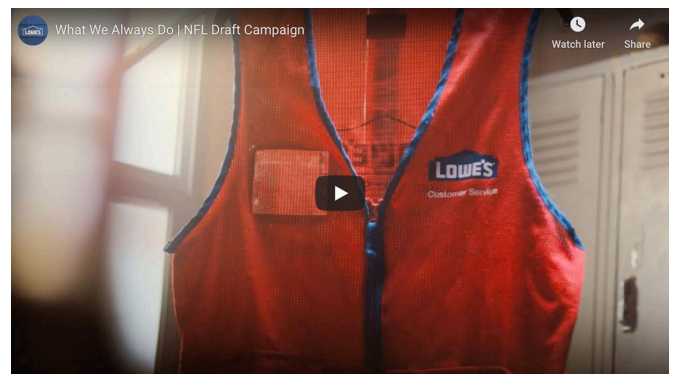
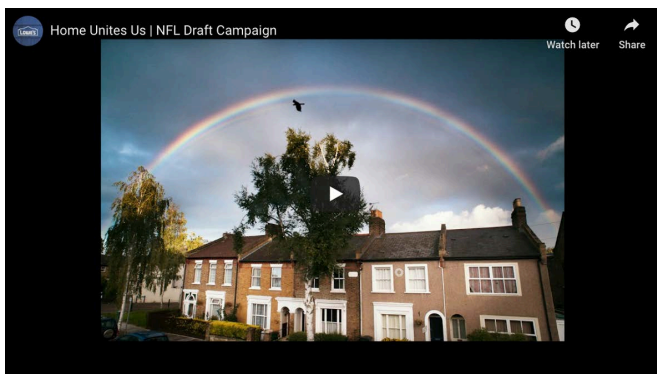
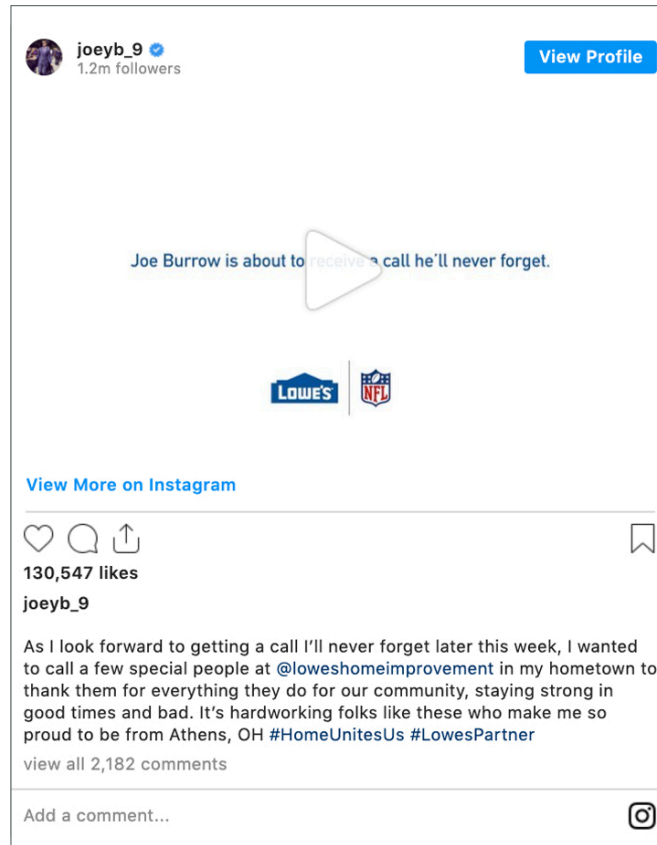
The first spot debuted on ESPN on the opening day of the draft, 23 April, while the other two aired throughout the rest of the draft on 24 and 25 April and continued to run across national television for two weeks after the event.

Outcome

With the three television commercials running during the three-day telecast, the TV reach across the NFL Network, ESPN, ABC, ESPN Deportes and digital channels, totalled more than 55 million viewers.

In terms of social media statistics, the spots generated more than 266,000 views on Lowe's social platforms, while views on the three athlete ambassadors' Instagram pages reached more than a million combined (Burrow 950,000, Tagovailoa 107,000 and McCaffrey 30,000).







Joel is Not Happy – Mountain Dew & the NBA

This mobile first, GIF-led campaign leveraged the 2020 All-Star Weekend through a collection of Joel Embiid GIFs and encouraged fans to celebrate the three-day event via Giphy.

Mountain Dew has been the lead soft drink of PepsiCo's marketing around the NBA. The brand is strongly digital as it focuses on millennials – led by its Green Label online magazine and record label linked to skateboarding, art and music. The NBA alliance continues this strategy.

Objectives

In 2020, the fifth year of the PepsiCo-NBA partnership, February's All-Star Weekend saw Mountain Dew tweak one of its key NBA assets, the Three-Point Contest, integrating the brand into the competition's title and the event itself in the form of

the 'Mountain Dew Zone', from which players shot a special green Mountain Dew-branded ball that was worth three points (as opposed to the standard one).

This activation sat alongside its regular 'Mountain Dew Courtside Studios' and fan event with players from Mtn Dew's NBA roster such as Philadelphia 76ers centre Joel Embiid and the New Orleans Pelicans' Zion Williamson.

The citrus soft drink brand briefed its marketers to amplify this branded event with a campaign reaching those not physically present at the All-Star Weekend itself.

Activation

Creative agency TBWA\Chiat\Day (New York) research found that the NBA is not only the most talked about sports league on social media in the USA, but that it

is also the most social media friendly sports league.

Whilst other leagues often try to clamp down on copyrighted content used by fans on social media, the NBA prefers to open up its content. During NBA games, fans flood feeds with GIFs to react to the biggest plays.

Reckoning that the same set of reaction GIFs [were overused to the point of boredom](#), the team's solution to the brand's challenge was a fresh set called 'Joel Is Not Happy'.

Featuring NBA star, brand ambassador and human highlight reel Joel Embiid, the campaign was based on the idea that Embiid was unhappy because the internet keeps using old GIFs to react to his highlights and that

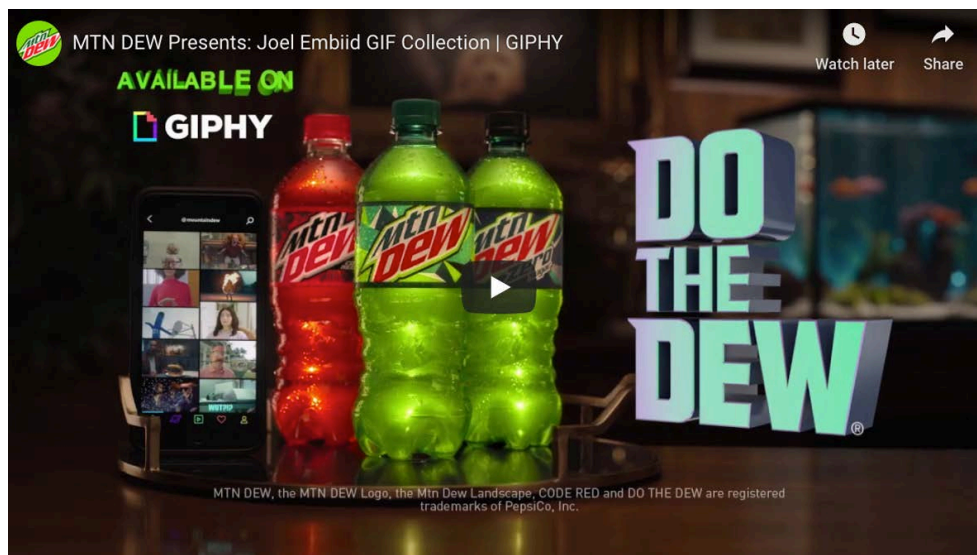
Mountain Dew believed he deserved better ones.

So the soft drink sponsor created a library of worthy GIFs, released the collection during NBA All-Star Weekend and encouraged people to 'up their GIF game' by using GIPHY to tweet when Embiid was 'on his game' during All-Star Weekend.

Outcome

The Embiid GIFs instantly became part of internet culture.

They were used 6.5m times during the 2020 NBA All-Star Weekend, which resulted in the campaign trending on GIPHY – the only brand to trend on the platform over the All-Star Weekend – and Twitter.

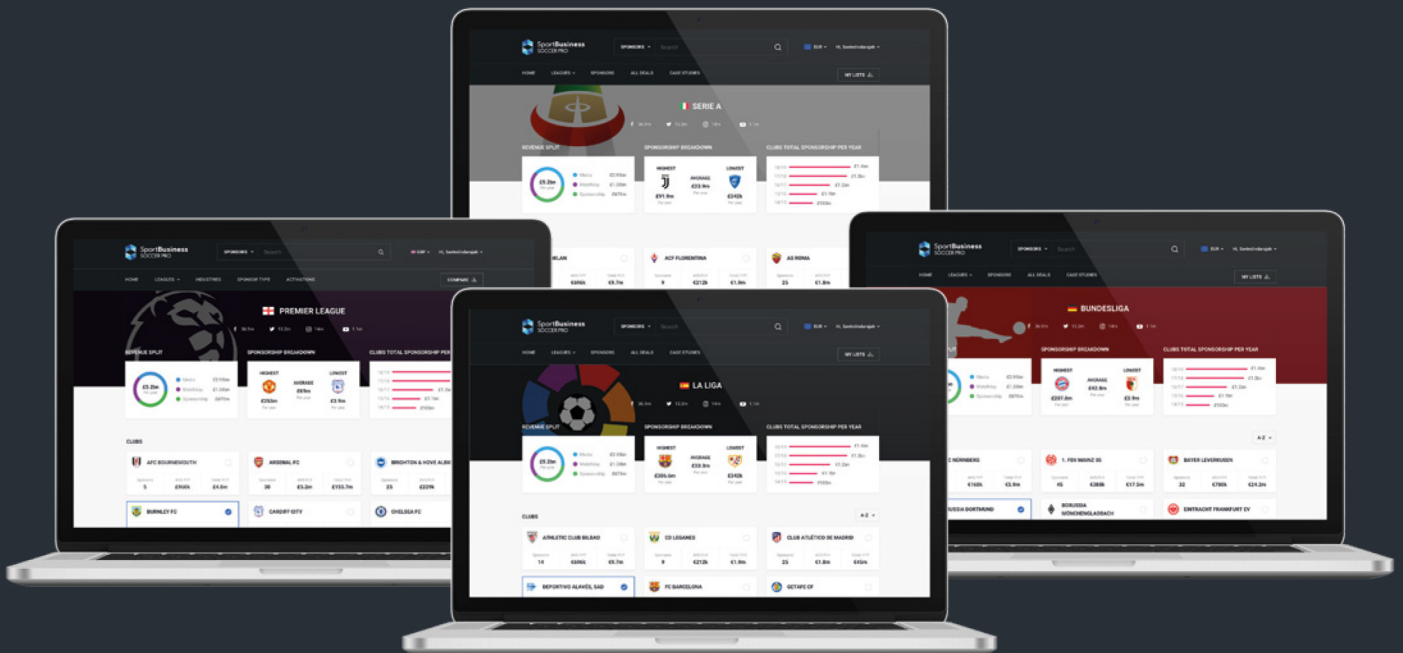


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Laundry Night – Tide & NFL

Procter & Gamble detergent brand Tide used the start of the 2019 NFL – and its NBC media partnership – to kickstart a national debate about the best night to do laundry.

Objective

Laundry brand Tide, whose parent company Procter & Gamble's has a multi-brand partnership with the NFL, set out to leverage the start of the NFL season in September 2019 by boosting social media conversation around laundry and the Tide brand, ultimately to drive sales.

Activation

The campaign was based on two insights about the typical American Sunday night. Firstly, that Sunday night is for football night (with 22m viewers) and

secondly, that Sunday night is also laundry night (with 200 million laundry loads done on Sunday nights each week).

To own the Sunday night conversation across the country, Tide and agency Saatchi & Saatchi (New York) kicked off the season by giving NFL fans a reason to celebrate – a different day to do laundry.

Ahead of the first game of the season, Tide launched a television commercial starring legendary quarterback Peyton Manning announcing that the brand and the NFL had teamed up to make Tuesday official laundry night.

It even rebranded the meaning of the letters NFL as Not For Laundry.

The next phase brought to life Tide's media partnership with broadcaster NBC and saw stars of the channel's hit show *The Voice* complain that

laundry night can't clash with their show.

This sparked a twitter war which trended across the country with people across the nation picking a side and tweeting using the hashtag #LaundryNight.

The laundry night debate was supported with spots featuring some of NBC's most popular shows, from soap opera Days of Our Lives to sitcom Superstore and even Saturday Night Live, all proclaiming that laundry night is Sunday and not any other night which clashed with their own air dates.

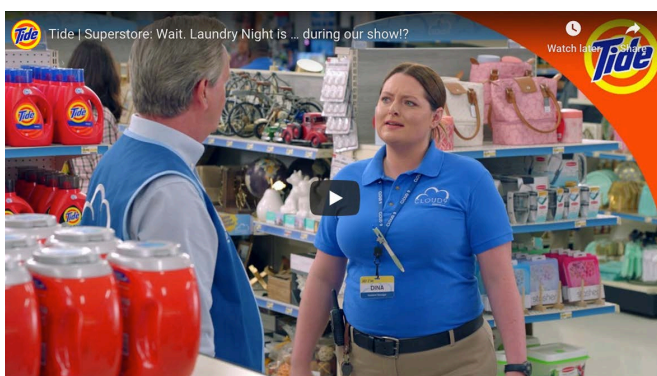
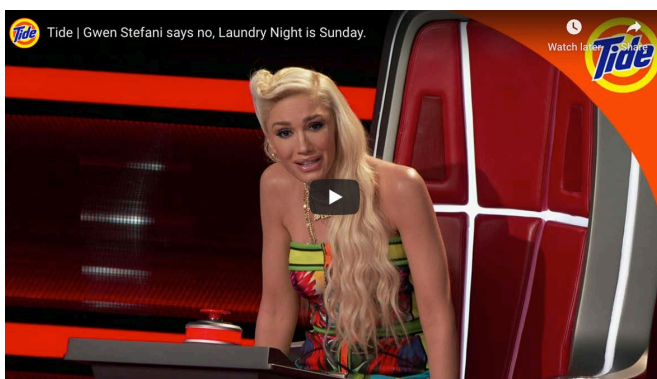
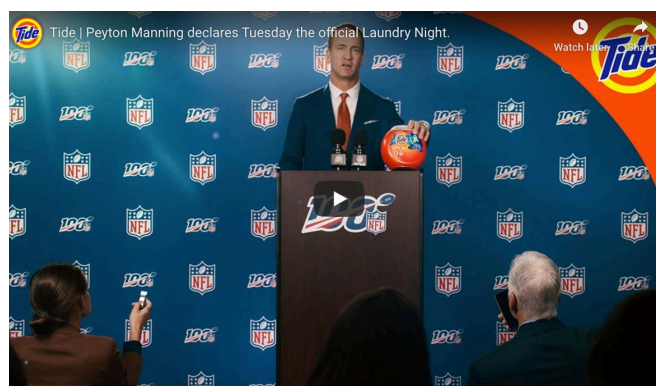
The campaign also capitalised on the social followings of a number of celebrity ambassadors –

from sports stars to musicians and actors – to fuel the debate. NFL players also released special edition 'Tuesday Tide Pods' on their social platforms.

Outcome

The campaign drove a 260-per-cent rise in social conversation about laundry, with a 90-per-cent positive brand sentiment about Tide.

It was covered in media across the nation (including titles such as ESPN, Fox, MSN, People, USA Today and Sports Illustrated) and drove 47 per cent sales growth during the period of the activation.





My Old Kentucky Home – Woodford Reserve & Churchill Downs Incorporated

Filmed at an empty Churchill Downs racecourse, Woodford Reserve's 'My Old Kentucky Home' spot was an homage to the delayed 2020 Kentucky Derby and the centrepiece of a virtual event activation that included social cocktail making masterclasses and limited-edition packaging.

Objectives

With the 2020 Kentucky Derby postponed until September due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the race's lead sponsor Woodford Reserve briefed Energy BBDO to create a campaign that would keep some of the event's traditions alive on the first Saturday in May – the day the race is usually run – while driving awareness of the bourbon brand's association with and support for the race.

Activation

Brand and agency made use of the empty Churchill Downs with a hero spot shot at the track, spearheading an activation programme running around the usual race date.

Focusing around its social platforms, the lead commercial was based on a stirring rendition of the classic 'My Old Kentucky Home'. The song has been performed at the Derby since the early 20th century.

The ad was shot by a small team to ensure no more than four people were on location at a time to respect the state social distancing rules, while a pair of drones were used to capture aerial shots. The agency's internal studio Flare worked on post-production and the team created the ad in just two weeks – from conception to final approval.

It debuted on Saturday 2 May, during NBC's re-airing of the classic 2015 Derby (American Pharoah's victory was the start of his run to the Triple Crown).

Woodford Reserve also participated in what Churchill Downs billed as an "at-home celebration" on the Saturday, with events including virtual tours of the Derby Museum streamed on the Derby's social media channels and a Mint Julep masterclass from Woodford Reserve's master distiller Chris Morris – all culminating in a "global live toast to the Derby" streamed on the brand's YouTube channel.

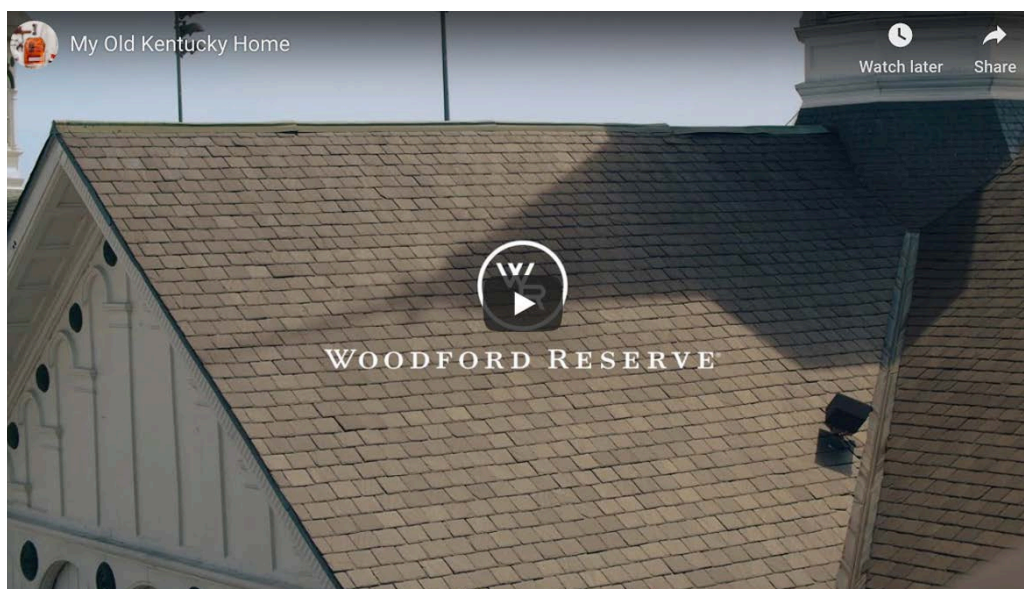
As usual, the brand had created a limited edition 2020 race bottle and packaging, launched back in March.

Outcome

The hero video generated four million views on Woodford Reserve's own YouTube channel, plus a further 300,000 views on its Facebook and 25,000 on its Twitter feed.

The Mint Julep masterclass generated 10,000 views on Facebook and YouTube and the brand's 30-minute 'Bourbon, Horses & History: Stories and Cocktail Classes' live stream attracted 47,000 views on Facebook.

Social media buzzed around the 'Kentucky Derby at Home' weekend with 91 per cent positive social sentiment around the virtual event.





Not All Heroes Wear Capes – Bud Light & MLB

In the middle of the 2019 World Series between the Washington Nationals and the Houston Astros, something incredible happened.

During Game 5 of the series in Nationals Stadium on Sunday 27 October, a home fan was holding two Bud Lights when the ball flew toward him in the stands. He was forced to make a choice: snatch a priceless memento from the World Series or protect his precious Bud Lights. He chose his beers.

Bud Light, MLB's beer sponsor, leapt on the opportunity with a quick turnaround activation spanning online, offline and traditional paid advertising to expand its planned World Series footprint.

Objective

The simple objective was to turn a brand-relevant,

mid-series incident into an opportunity to leverage Bud Light's World Series reach and engagement.

Activation

In the hours that immediately followed television coverage of the incident, Bud Light created a cross-channel marketing campaign that began with the beer brand asking the internet to help them identify the fan.

The Twittersphere identified him as DC resident Jeff Adams and the next day, 28 October, the beer brand flew Adams to Houston for Game 6, where they gave him a ticket to again sit in home run territory in the stands wearing a custom branded t-shirt saying 'Always Save the Beers' (these T-shirts were also sold online).

The brand then spread its low latency campaign

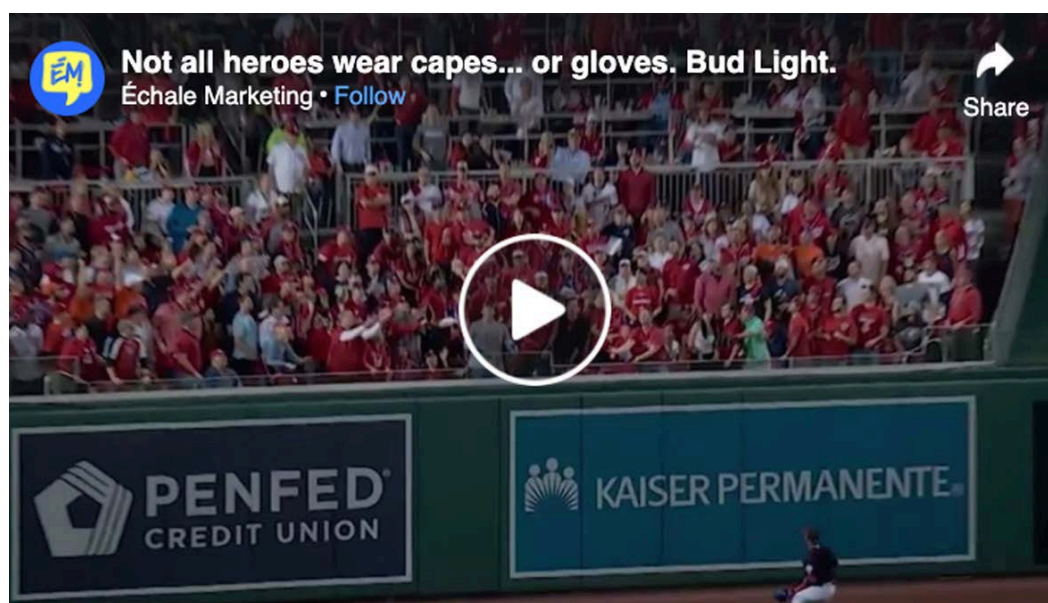
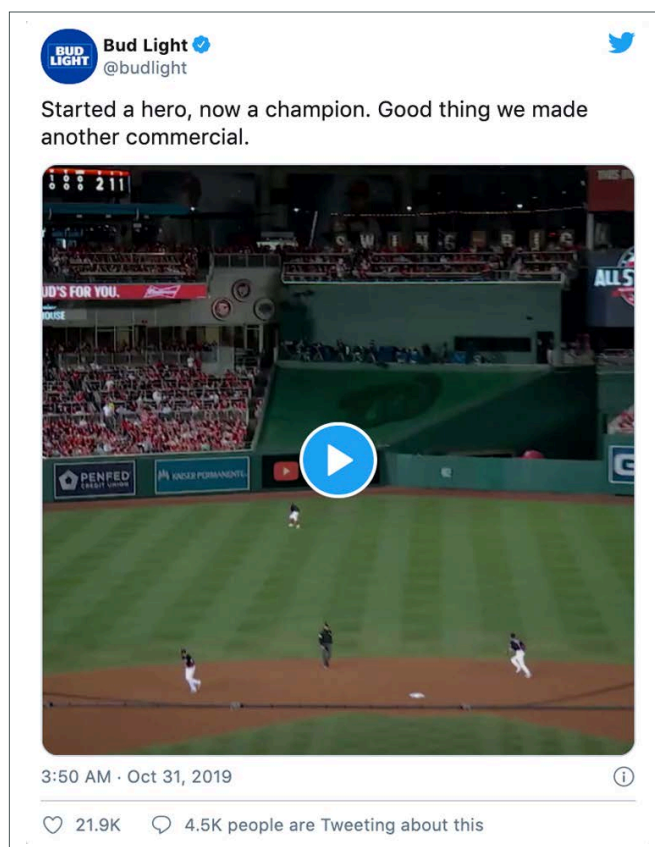
from social to traditional media with a paid television commercial that aired during Game 6 called 'Not All Heroes Wear Capes, or Gloves'.

Two days later, as the Nationals completed a comeback World Series win during Game 7 on Wednesday 30 October, the beer brand kept its new hero fan front and centre with an additional spot which congratulated him and all the other Nationals fans.

Adams became an icon of the team's comeback victory that it earned him a spot on the team bus for the victory parade.

Outcome

The campaign generated more than 183,000 social mentions and 500-plus news stories in just 48 hours, driving 440 million PR impressions and an estimated \$8m in earned media exposure.





Official Beer Sponsor of the NBA



The Return & #UltraCourtside – Michelob Ultra & the NBA

Michelob Ultra, the official beer of the NBA, leveraged its rights around the 2020 NBA season restart with a multi-channel campaign led by a Jimmy Butler singalong commercial.

Objectives

Michelob Ultra's marketers briefed Wieden+Kennedy New York to leverage the NBA's restart and drive awareness of its status as the league's new official beer through a campaign bringing to life its positioning as a brand that stands for 'active enjoyment'.

Activation

The agency's solution was a multi-strand campaign spearheaded by a hero commercial called 'The Return', which sees Miami Heat star Jimmy Butler

singing along to Hall & Oates' *You Make My Dreams (Come True)* as he packs his bag and gets ready to travel to the league's biosecure bubble in Orlando.

The ad was teased socially on 22 July ahead of the full hero ad's television debut on 24 July, a week ahead of the league restart.

The agency's PR around the launch said that it initially pitched Butler for the campaign by showing the client a video of the player [showing off his singing skills on a plane with his US national team teammates back in 2016](#).

Butler's joyful singalong spot, which ran across national TV in the USA and on the brand's social platforms, was the first of several new pieces of creative from the beer brand around the NBA Restart.

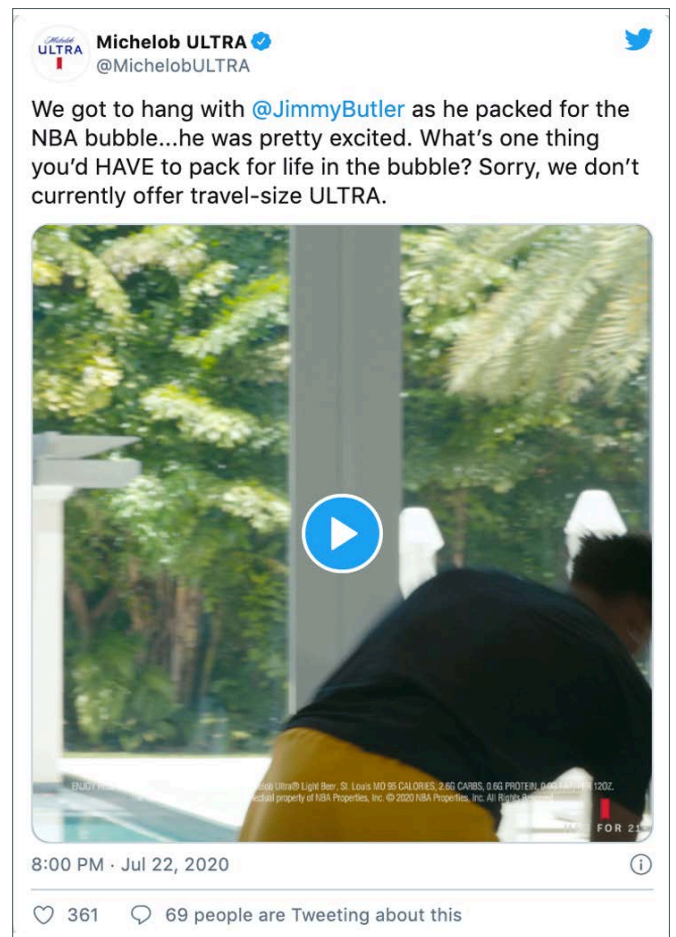
It was followed by a virtual viewing initiative that ran for the rest of the attenuated season. Michelob

Ultra Courtside was a digital experience that allowed fans to appear virtually inside the behind-closed-doors arena via an exclusive streaming feed service. Fans could follow Michelob Ultra social channels for details on how to win access as well as additional exclusive giveaways and experiences.

Ultra Courtside was promoted socially and via a video narrated by [Chicago Bulls legend Scottie Pippen](#).

Outcome

Within a week of being posted online on July 23, the Jimmy Butler spot notched up 1.8m views on the brand's own social channels (with 463,000 on Facebook, 350,000 on YouTube, 196,000 on Twitter and 787,000 on Instagram).



Secret®

Let's #KickInequality

The Secret Kicker – Procter & Gamble & the NFL

Procter & Gamble deodorant brand Secret kicked off conversation about women in sport with a Super Bowl LIV ad spot involving US women's soccer superstar Carli Lloyd.

P&G's deal with the NFL covers marketing rights in the grooming, fabric/air care and household goods categories, which it activates for several brands including Gillette, Febreze, Vicks, Head & Shoulders, Old Spice and Secret.

Objectives

After brand research found more than two-thirds of American girls believe society doesn't encourage women to play sports, P&G decided to leverage its rights on behalf of deodorant brand Secret to start a conversation about equality in sport in general and football in particular.

According to Secret associate brand director Sara Saunders, the objective for its Super Bowl was to seek to challenge and change this notion by spotlighting world-class female athletes on a field where gender equality is not yet the norm.

"Whether or not a woman wants to play football, shouldn't she at least be able to consider it a possibility?" explained Saunders. "We believe that there are some things women shouldn't have to sweat – and equal opportunity is one of them."

The activation fit into the brand's long-term buffing of its feminist image, which has used sports-led campaigns like [the 'Equality' campaign](#) and ['Cheer for Each Other' initiative](#), both fronted by Lloyd's USWNT teammate Alex Morgan. The NFL's fanbase is about 47 per cent female.

Activation

The activation, created by Secret's in-house team and produced by Mills James, was spearheaded by a Super Bowl spot called *The Secret Kicker*.

The commercial debuted on *The Ellen DeGeneres Show* and was posted online when Secret launched its first YouTube Masthead on 28 January 2020. On game day (2 February 2020) it aired during the official ESPN Super Bowl Pregame Show, just 10 minutes before kick-off.

Starring US soccer players Lloyd and Crystal Dunn, Secret's spot starts with an average football game day scene – a full stadium, passionate supporters, players moving to the line of scrimmage before a crucial kick – before taking a surprising turn when, following a successful kick, the kicker and holder are revealed as Lloyd and Dunn. The stadium goes crazy and the brand issues a call-to-action: 'Let's Kick Inequality'.

Lloyd had previously demonstrated her real-life

place-kicking ability by [nailing a 55-yard field goal](#) during a 2019 pre-season practice session with the Philadelphia Eagles.

Secret supported the sport by using a group of celebrities, athletes and influencers to push the message and its #KickInequality tag.

Outcome

ESPN's pregame show had an average audience of 21.6 million viewers and, as the secret spot aired during the final commercial break, viewership is likely to have been above average.

Key social media metrics since the spot was posted on January 27 include:

- 19 million YouTube views on Secret's channel
- Three million views on Secret's Twitter feed
- 1.4 million Facebook views through the Ellen DeGeneres Show partnership



VICTORY!

TREA TURNER SWOOPED IN AND STOLE FREE TACOS FOR AMERICA!



Steal a Base, Steal a Taco – Taco Bell & MLB

At the 2019 World Series, Taco Bell rolled out the seventh iteration of its 'Steal a Base, Steal a Taco' campaign with a strand allowing fans to gamble on which player would steal the crucial base.

Objective

Taco Bell's primary goal is to drive new in-store footfall, and turn first-time Taco Bell consumers going in to claim their free taco into returning customers.

Activation

The seventh Steal a Base, Steal a Taco again promised to buy everyone in the USA a free Locos Tacos for the first base stolen during the 2019 World Series.

The core campaign was promoted through a TV spot, launched on October 9, supported by social

media content across both brand and rights-holder channels.

The creative took a classic social style by enhancing on-field footage with cartoon style CGI embellishments.

And following the end of the federal ban on sports betting, Taco Bell teamed up with BetMGM to introduce a little World Series wagering.

Through the BetMGM tie-up, operated by digital media agency Roar Digital, the taco chain offered fans a chance to gamble real money on the player they thought would steal the first base of the World Series – nicknamed the 'Taco Hero' in campaign content.

Wagers could be laid at MGM Resorts in Nevada, Mississippi and New Jersey (or by downloading the playMGM digital app) on 14 October, before the end

of the MLB Championship Series, with odds offers on a list of active players from the four remaining playoff teams (the St Louis Cardinals, Washington Nationals, Houston Astros and New York Yankees).

Outcome

The campaign ran from 23 to 31 October but the anticipation was unusually short-lived, as Washington Nationals shortstop Trea Turner stole second base in Game One.

Over the next 24 hours Taco Bell saw one of its

busiest annual sales periods as millions of Americans claimed their free taco by visiting a store between 2pm and 6pm or ordering online for a free deliver.

“On a sales basis, it’s a great day for us, but it’s the lasting impression on customers we are actually more proud of,” said Taco Bell director of brand partnerships Will Bortz.

Taco Bell’s in-stadium assets were seen by 200,000 fans in the ballpark and an average TV audience of 14 million over each of the seven games (Game Seven alone drew 24 million viewers across all platforms.


Taco Bell 
 @tacobell



The shirt says it all. The World Series™ is coming up and we're rooting for tacos. Watch for the first stolen base and win a free taco.



NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. REDEMPTION AT A DESIGNATED DATE AND TIME. SUBJECT TO TERMS AT TACOBELL.COM/STEALATACO. LIMIT ONE (1) PER PERSON, AT PARTICIPATING LOCATIONS, WHILE SUPPLIES LAST. VOID WHERE PROHIBITED. ©2019 TACO BELL IP HOLDER, LLC.

Steal A Base, Steal A Taco
www.tacobell.com

6:21 PM · Oct 14, 2019 

♥ 247 💬 83 people are Tweeting about this


MLB 
 @MLB



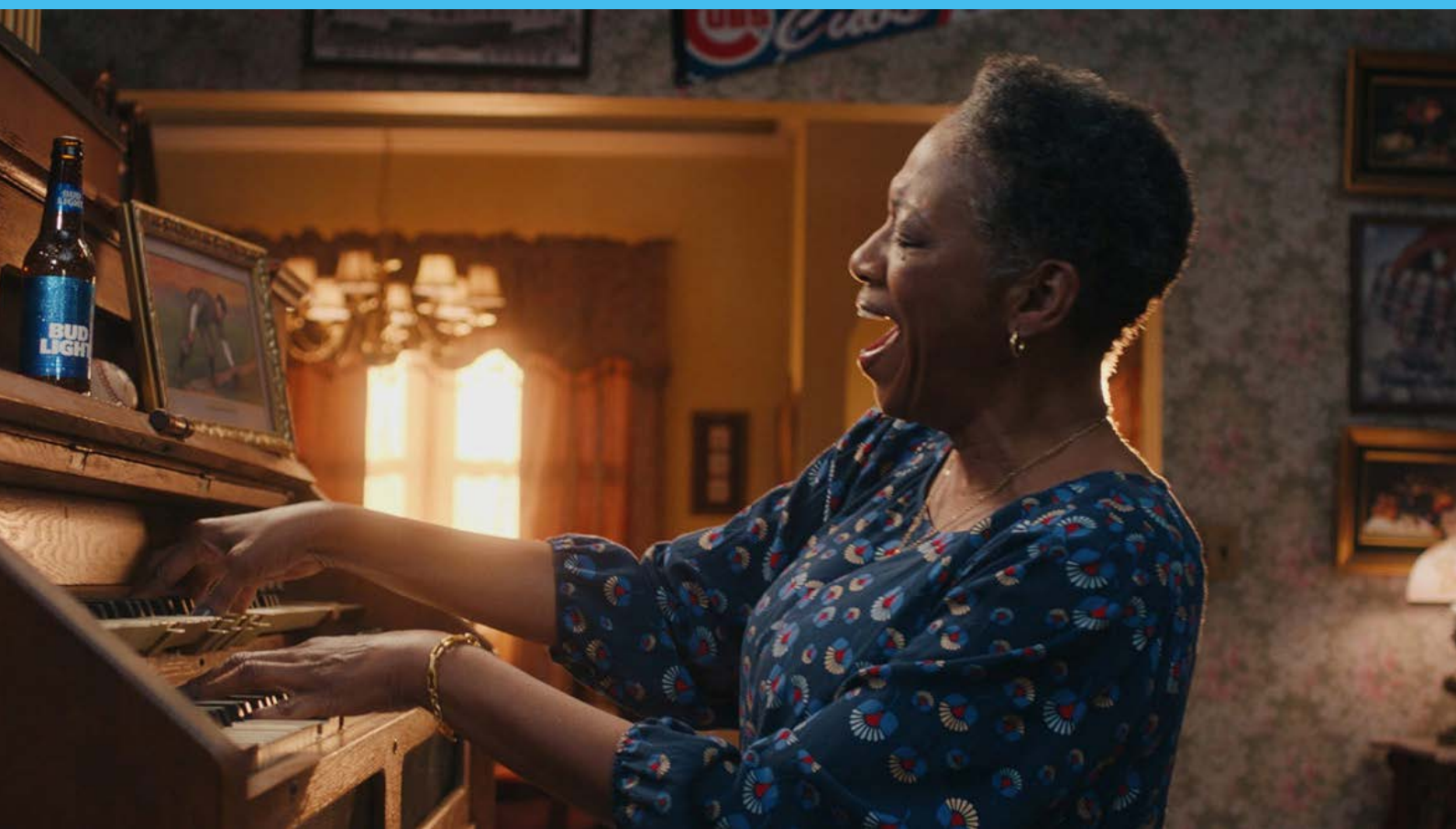
It's back!

Once again, the first #WorldSeries stolen base = a free @TacoBell 🌮 for everyone in America.



3:18 PM · Oct 13, 2019 

♥ 931 💬 144 people are Tweeting about this



Take Me Out & #BudLightHomers – Bud Light & MLB

Bud Light launched a campaign heralding the start of the MLB's Covid-19-truncated season based around a reworking of the classic song 'Take Me Out to The Ball Game'.

Objectives

The ABInBev marketing team briefed its agencies to celebrate the return of Major League Baseball with an upbeat campaign that drove awareness of Bud Light's official beer status, boosted at-home sales, involved at-home fans through consumer creation and linked the physical games to socially distanced fans unable to attend ballparks due to the pandemic.

Activation

The league's 162-game schedule had been due to start on 26 March, but the pandemic-delayed 2020

MLB season finally began 119 days late, in the last week of July.

The campaign celebrating that return, developed by agencies Wieden + Kennedy NY and FCB, launched on July 21 with a TV and social spot based around a new, at-home twist on [the traditional seventh inning stretch song](#).

The hero commercial ran across television and online and features everyday sports fans passing lockdown without sport by drinking Bud Light and singing the reimaged version of the game's famous theme song.

The traditional commercial phase was followed by an influencer-led consumer creation phase called the [#TakeMeOutChallenge](#).

This saw the beer brand team up with celebrities – including former Destiny's Child singer Kelly

Rowland and actor/comedian George Lopez – singing their own versions of the song in videos posted on their personal social platforms, to encourage fans to create their own versions of the track in the #TakeMeOutChallenge.

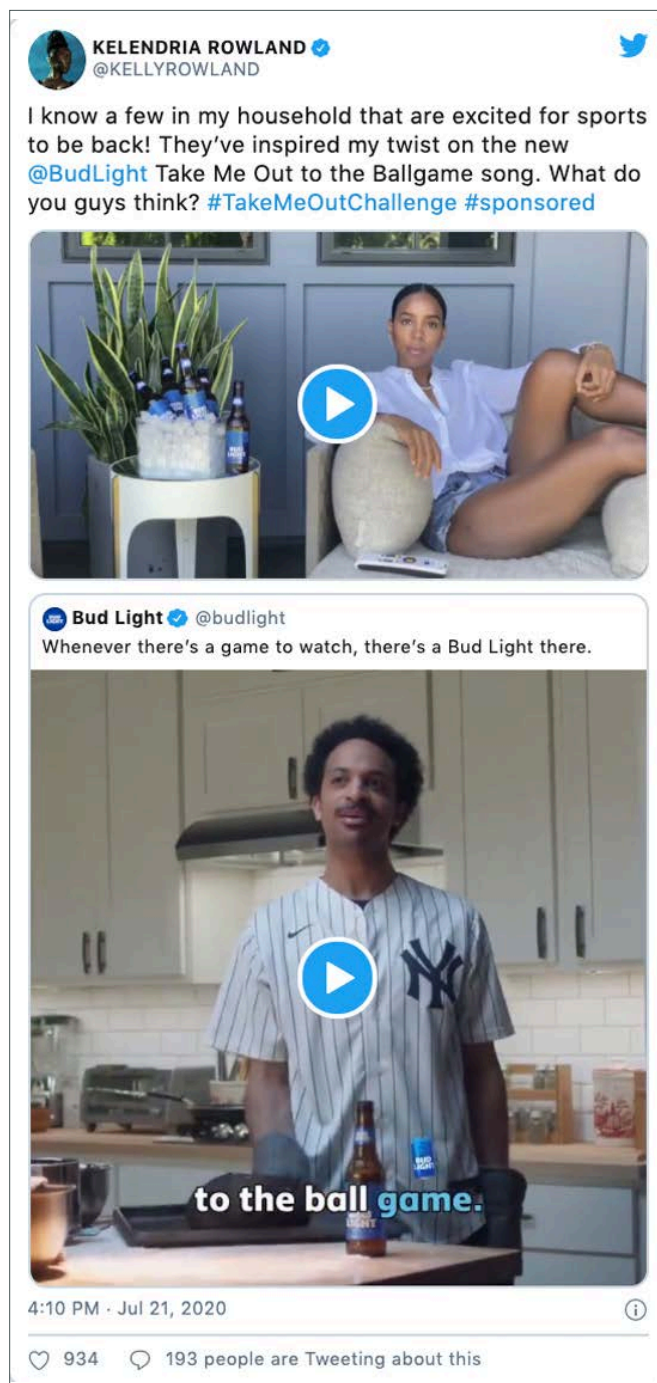
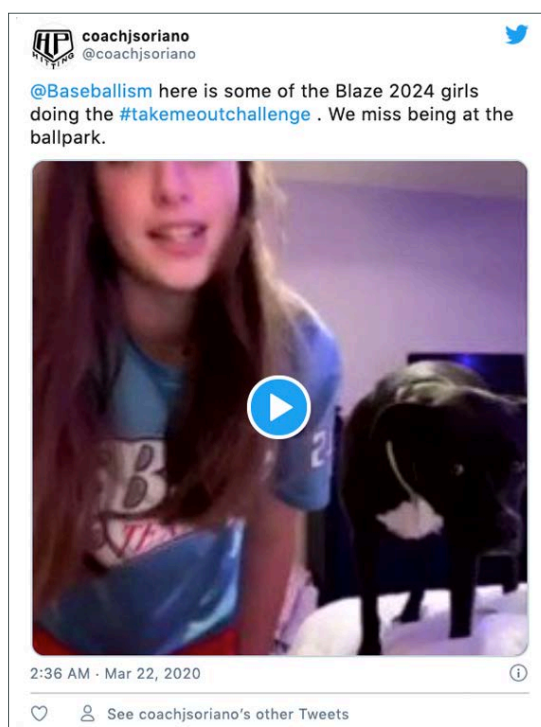
This led to amateur teams and baseball fans posting their own versions of the song alongside the campaign hashtag.

'Bud Light Homers' was a further social media activation strand that offered fans a chance to win an authentic 2020 home run ball by tweeting #BudLightHomers and #Sweepstakes and tagging their favourite team – engaging fans with the games even as they were barred from live attendance.

Outcome

Since it was first posted on July 21, the hero commercial has notched 1.272m views on the beer brand's official YouTube channel (plus a further 142,000 on Twitter and 17,600 on Instagram).

According to social media analytics company Zoomph's 'MLB Opening Weekend Report', Bud Light's #BudLightHomers campaign was the top performing baseball-themed social media campaign over Opening Weekend – it generated 17,025 posts and 6,877,648 impressions with a total of 48,960 engagements, earning the brand over \$110,000 in social media value over the weekend.



George Lopez @georgelopez

So excited for sports to be back that I made my own version of the new @BudLight Take Me Out to the Ballgame song. What do you guys think?
#TakeMeOutChallenge #Sponsored



Bud Light @budlight

Whenever there's a game to watch, there's a Bud Light there.




5:00 PM · Jul 21, 2020

172 31 people are Tweeting about this


Eric Stonestreet @ericstonestreet

I'm so pumped for baseball to be back! Here's my version of the new @BudLight Take Me Out to the Ballgame song. (I'm a mustard, relish, onion guy, FYI)
#TakeMeOutChallenge #sponsored



Bud Light @budlight

Whenever there's a game to watch, there's a Bud Light there.



1:07 PM · Jul 21, 2020

723 89 people are Tweeting about this

Bud Light @budlight

FIRST HOME RUN OF THE YEAR! Remember to tag your favorite team with #BudLightHomers and #Sweepstakes for your chance to win an authentic 2020 Home Run Ball! #OpeningNight



12:20 AM · Jul 24, 2020

474 630 people are Tweeting about this

Captain Morgan MAJOR LEAGUE SOCCER HAS A NEW CAPTAIN

OFFICIAL PARTNER OF MAJOR LEAGUE SOCCER

There's More Fun to Be Had – Captain Morgan & MLS

Fighting declining US sales, Captain Morgan joined MLS as official rum and spirits partner in 2019, activating through a season-long campaign that spanned stadium signage, around-the-ground street teams and sampling, ticket giveaways, national television ads, OOH work and digital and social content.

The brand's deal with MLS was struck mid-season, in July, and ran in parallel with several MLS club deals, including Chicago Fire, DC United, New York City FC, Philadelphia Union and Seattle Sounders FC.

MLS switched its commercial strategy in 2019, becoming the first major US professional sports league to permit companies in the sports betting and spirits categories to include their brands on jerseys, for venue naming-rights deals, stadium signage, on-field ads and custom programming.

Objective

The MLS deal was a strategic response to Diageo's mid-July 2019 announcement of a five-per-cent year-on-year fall in net sales of Captain Morgan in the USA – its biggest market – that it put down to a shift away from carbonated drinks as health-conscious Americans drink less rum and coke.

The deal's umbrella objective is to build a strong relationship between consumers and the Captain's brand. The average age of an MLS fan is 40 – the youngest of all the major US sports, and thus closest to Captain Morgan's young adult primary target demographic.

The approach was to draw parallels between the passionate atmosphere at MLS matches and the sense of fun the Captain Morgan brand stands for, by rewarding dedicated MLS fans with 'the fun only

Captain can bring'.

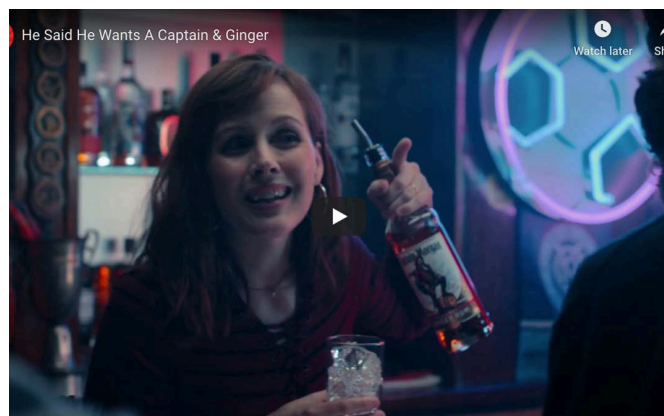
Activation

In addition to a 'Drink Responsibly' leverage strand, the activation was based around Captain Morgan's global marketing big idea: 'There's more fun to be had.'

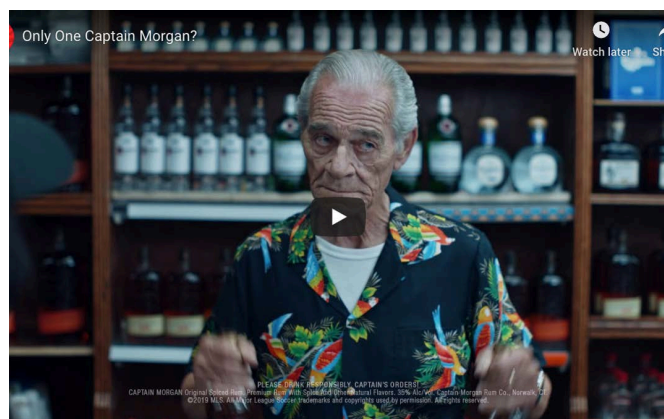
The activation programme kicked off around the 2019 MLS All-Star Game at Orlando's Exploria Stadium on July 31, where leverage strands included in-stadium signage, sampling and giveaways and a team of Captain Morgan ground representatives outside the stadium handing out tickets to fans with the name Morgan (first, middle or last) on a first-come, first-served basis.

This was combined with the roll out of a slate of national TV commercials celebrating partnership.

The series of 15-second spots, which all end with the 'There's More Fun To Be Had' tagline, each primarily focus on one of the MLS clubs the brand had partnered with, like 'Captain & Ginger: New York City FC':



...and 'Only One Captain Morgan: DC United':



The at-event and television work were supported by content running across nationwide in-stadium

work, OOH in selected cities and activity across the brand's digital and social channels.

Another aspect of the alliances enabled fans to purchase custom-labelled bottles of Captain Morgan Original Spiced Rum featuring official team colours and crests.

A further activation strand was a ticket giveaway programme, such as its November 'Captain Morgan With the Assist' micro-campaign, which offered free tickets to the 2019 MLS Cup for 10 people named 'Morgan' (plus two friends each).

At the end of the season, after the Seattle Sounders' MLS Cup victory, the brand celebrated with a team-specific rum cocktail.

Outcome

The season-long campaign reached 4.35 million fans in-stadium, 8.3 million viewers through its broadcast work and its flagship TV ads generated 20,000 views on the brand's YouTube channels.

Captain Morgan saw a two-per-cent increase in rum sales in the US over the six months to December 2019, coinciding with the timeline of its MLS campaign.

And Diageo responded by expanding its roster of MLS team partnerships in February 2020, adding new deals with Inter Miami CF, Los Angeles FC, Minnesota United and Nashville SC. In March it extended its MLS relationship with an additional multi-year partnership to become the official rum partner of MLS Canada.





This Mama Keeps Going – Chase & the United States Tennis Association

In 2019, Chase expanded on its 2018 US Open #ThisMama campaign with Serena Williams, again firing a conversation about motherhood and work.

Objective

Chase aimed to build on the momentum of its 2018 activation.

While #ThisMama was an in-your-face approach – soundtracked by LL Cool J and supported by OOH media at the tournament and around New York, in-bank branches and online – the 2019 campaign took a more introspective tone.

It aimed to shine a light on the incredible strength of mothers by using Serena as the embodiment of this strength, and by being more candid and open about motherhood's good days and bad.

The idea emerged from cultural research

suggesting the USA is going through 'a collective moment of unprecedented honesty about the challenges of motherhood'.

To position itself as a trusted advisor through many of life's chapters, Chase highlighted its support for Serena as a new mom.

Activation

'This Mama Keeps Going' shines a spotlight on the journey of motherhood from Williams' perspective.

The work, which aims to draw parallels between raising a child and winning a championship, was spearheaded by a hero spot that weaves together the parallel narratives of Williams' athletic achievement and motherhood into a single story.

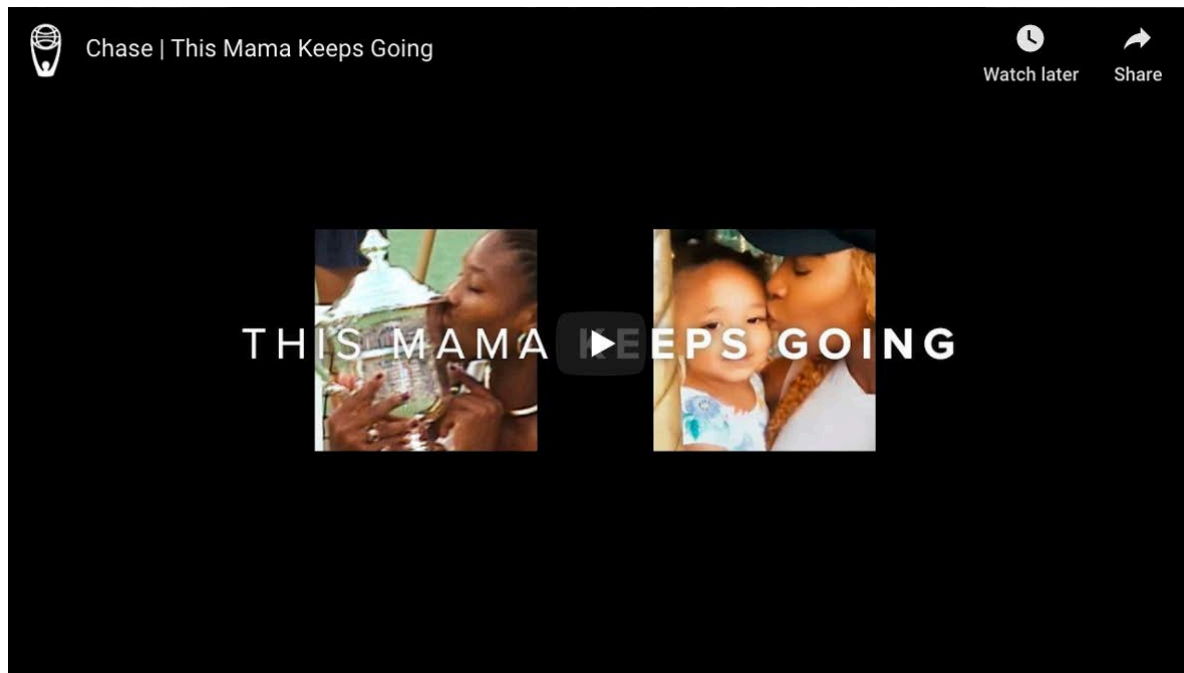
The September 3 launch of the social campaign, developed in harness with creative agency Droga5,

was timed to coincide with Williams playing her quarter-final match in the 2019 tournament and leveraging spiking media and fan interest around her attempt to win a record 24th Grand Slam singles title. She had won her 23rd, the 2017 Australian Open, while eight weeks pregnant.

The work aired on television (ESPN) and on Chase's social channels, while Serena supported the campaign by posting the video on her feeds.

Outcome

The campaign's social content reached more than 100,000 people across Chase's platforms, led by 43,000 video views on Twitter, 33,000 on Facebook and 22,000 on Instagram.



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