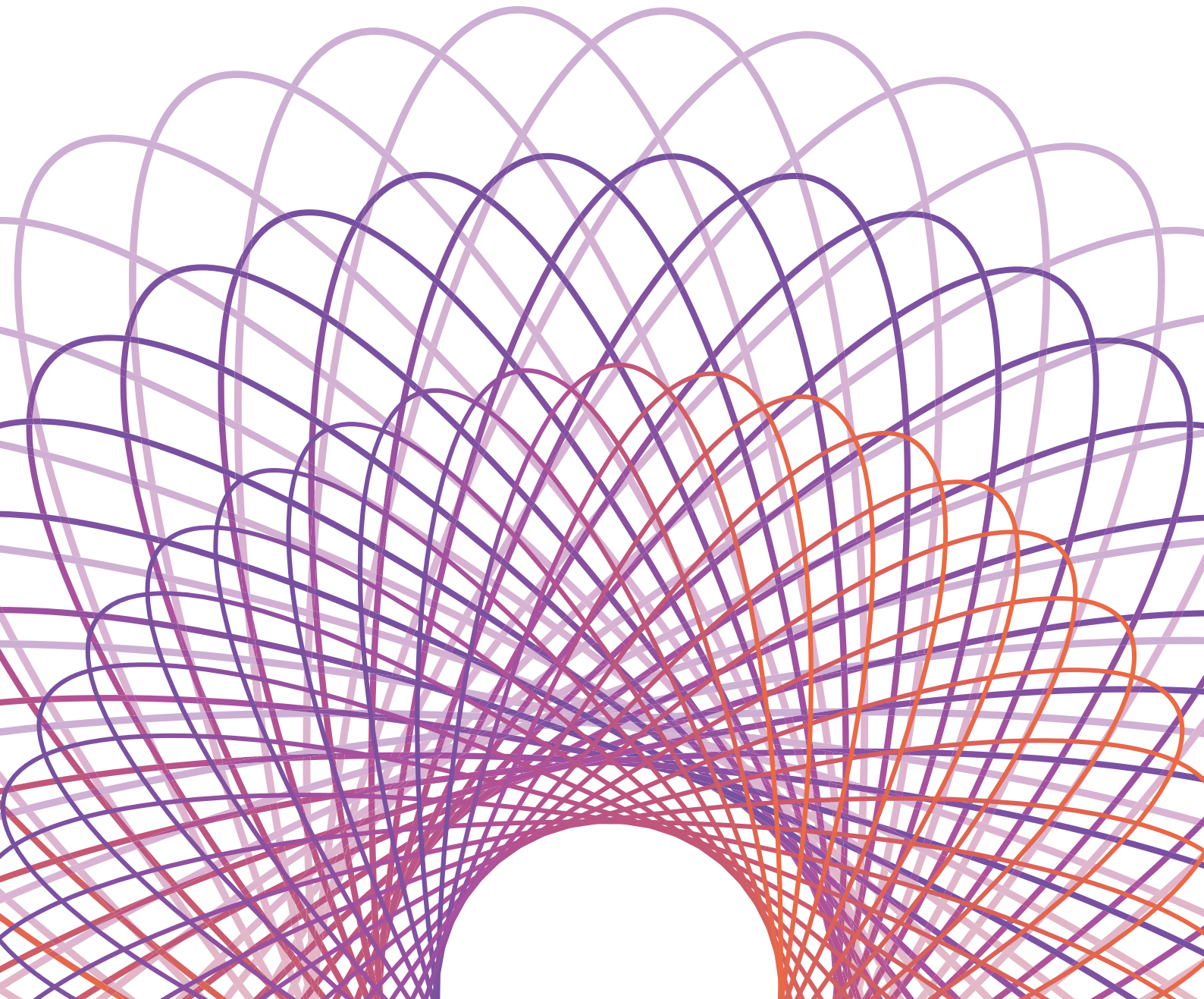


The Global 2020 Activation Casebook



The Global 2020 Activation Casebook

Case studies on the 25 most important sports sponsorship activations from the world's most innovative brands



Richard Welbirg
Product Manager
SportBusiness Sponsorship

2020 was among the most difficult years imaginable for sponsors and marketing agencies. Covid-19 robbed them of events around which to activate for a good proportion of the year and – even when sport did make a faltering return in most countries – the ongoing pandemic put the kibosh on most experiential opportunities.

Thus, our collection of 2020's top activations the world over leans heavily toward digital first activations. Limited in what they could do, marketers innovated with virtual experiences (Kia, p34), or leaned into the dire global situation to appeal to shared values (Lowe's, p37), or thanked key workers fighting on the front line of the disease (Evian, p25).

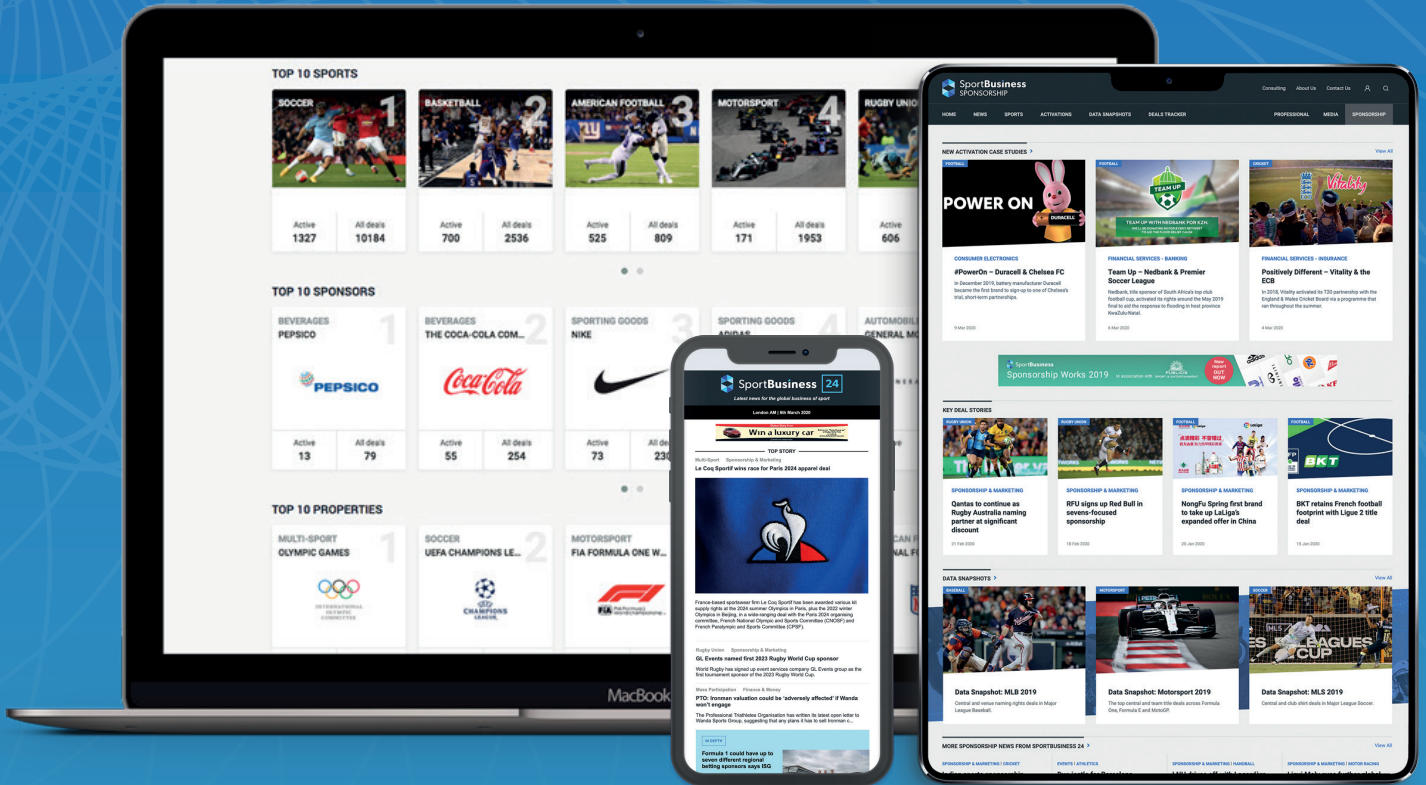
I hope you find inspiration for your own campaigns from the 2020 collection, and at the same time I hope the 2021 best of looks nothing like it.

Who is this report 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, we aim 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



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.

KEY DEAL STORIES

We deliver deeper coverage of the most important sponsorship deals, uncovering deal values, durations, inventories, activation plans and all-important context.

DEALS DATABASE

Our deal database makes it easy to extract what you need from our historic data. Its updated daily and already has data on **26,000+ deals!**

ACTIVATIONS CASEBOOKS

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

DAILY NEWS

Subscribers will receive the SportBusiness 24 news service – four daily emails stuffed with sport business news from our London, New York and Singapore offices.

Request a demonstration at: sportbusiness.com/sponsorship

Email: info@sportbusiness.com or call: + 44 (0) 2072 654100

Contents

- 5. Accor, QNB, Ooredoo, Nike & Paris Saint-Germain**
Tous Unis
- 7. Adidas & Leeds United FC**
Ready for Leeds
- 9. Apple & the NHL**
Hockey Tape (Shot on iPhone)
- 11. Bud Light & MLB**
Take Me Out & #BudLightHomers
- 14. Carlsberg & Liverpool FC**
Virtual Champions Red Keg
- 16. Castle Lager & the SAFA/SA Rugby**
One Nation, One Jersey (One Beer)
- 18. Cisco & Man City**
Blue Moon
- 20. Deloitte & the United States Golf Association**
U.S. Open AR
- 22. Dove Men+Care & the British & Irish rugby unions**
Care for Every Position You Play
- 25. Evian & the AELTC**
Thank You Key Workers
- 27. Grant Thornton & the PGA Tour/ The Players Championship**
Swing
- 29. IBM & the AELTC**
The Greatest Championships
- 32. Joma & Villarreal CF**
Our Colours, Our Skin
- 34. Kia & Uefa**
Trophy Tour/Heroes Walk/OMBC/Undefinable
- 37. Lowes & the NFL**
Home is What Unites Us
- 40. Mastercard & the R&A**
The e-Open
- 42. Michelob Ultra & the NBA**
Return & #UltraCourtside
- 44. Mountain Dew & the NBA**
Joel is Not Happy
- 46. Nike & VfL Bochum**
No Fuss. Football as It Should Be
- 49. PreZero & TSG 1899 Hoffenheim**
#SauberesSpiel/#CleanGame
- 51. Puma & AC Milan**
2020-21 Home Kit Launch
- 54. Santander & Uefa**
Santander Media House
- 56. Sony & Uefa**
PlayStation FC Final
- 59. Verizon & NFL**
5G Stadium Experience
- 61. Woodford Reserve & Churchill Downs Incorporated**
My Old Kentucky Home



Accor, QNB, Ooredoo, Nike & Paris Saint-Germain – Tous Unis

PSG teamed up with its sponsors and suppliers to raise funds for Parisian medical workers during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Objectives

The aim was to mobilise the PSG community – including sponsors, suppliers, fans, players and staff – to assist medical workers on the front line of care.

Activation

'Tous Unis' followed the club's mid-March decision to pledge €100,000 to help the fight against Covid-19. The initiative was spearheaded by the launch of a limited-edition jersey.

On 26 March 2020, PSG teamed up with its front-of-shirt sponsor Accor and fellow partners Nike, QNB and Ooredoo to produce 1,500 of the special kits.

Accor agreed to waive its rights and have its 'Live Limitless' logo replaced on the shirt front by 'Tous Unis'.

The shirts, which carried the logo of Assistance Publique – Paris Hospitals (AP-HP) and the Greater Paris University Hospitals, were sold through the official PSG online store for €175, with all proceeds going to AP – HP.

The fund-raising project was promoted with content running across the club's social platforms and PR'd through the Paris mainstream and football media.

More campaign strands followed, including a PSG and sponsors' crowdfunding platform to raise further funds for local hospitals and caregivers across the Paris and the Île-de-France region, as well as the Secours Populaire and club charity partner 'Action

Against Hunger’.

PSG also worked with its match day catering suppliers to deliver 1,200 free meals a day to hospital workers in Paris, using the Parc des Princes stadium kitchens and matchday food trucks with the help of 60 volunteer suppliers.

Outcome

The shirts sold out in just 12 hours and raised more than €200,000 for healthcare staff fighting the pandemic in Paris hospitals.

More than than 25,000 meals have been delivered to seven separate hospitals since the April 9 start of the project.



**READY
FOR
LEEDS**

**A NEW JOURNEY BEGINS.
TOMORROW IS OURS.
KEEP THE FAITH.**



Adidas & Leeds United FC – Ready for Leeds

Taking over as kit supplier in 2020-21, adidas brought Leeds United into its pandemic-influenced, global 'Ready for Sport' brand platform when unveiling the new kit in mid-August 2020.

Objectives

The objective was to leverage the excitement around the club's return to the top tier of English football – for the first time in more than fifteen years – to drive sales through both the sportswear brand and the club's online purchasing platforms.

Activation

The creative took inspiration from adidas's umbrella 'Ready For Sport' brand platform (which first launched in April during the first North American/European lockdown), and asked whether the Premier League

was 'Ready For Leeds'.

The campaign launched on August 19, three weeks ahead of the club's first Premier League match.

Its multi-channel work was spearheaded by a hero 'Adidas x Leeds'. Released first on the club's Twitter feed and then across its digital and social channels, the 60-second video features famous fans like Nikolaj Coster-Waldau and Ralph Ineson and club legends like defender Lucas Radebe and forward Lee Sharpe.

The creative highlights several key product features, reminds viewers that the club has won more trophies wearing their famous white shirt than any other colour jersey and urges fans 'from the streets to the stands, no matter where the game takes you, show your support for this one club city' – plus the key info: 'you can order yours on Thursday 20th August from 8am online only on <https://shop>.

leedsunited.com/ and coming soon on <http://adidas.co.uk>'.

The lead spot was supported through additional social media content featuring imagery of players from the men's and women's teams.

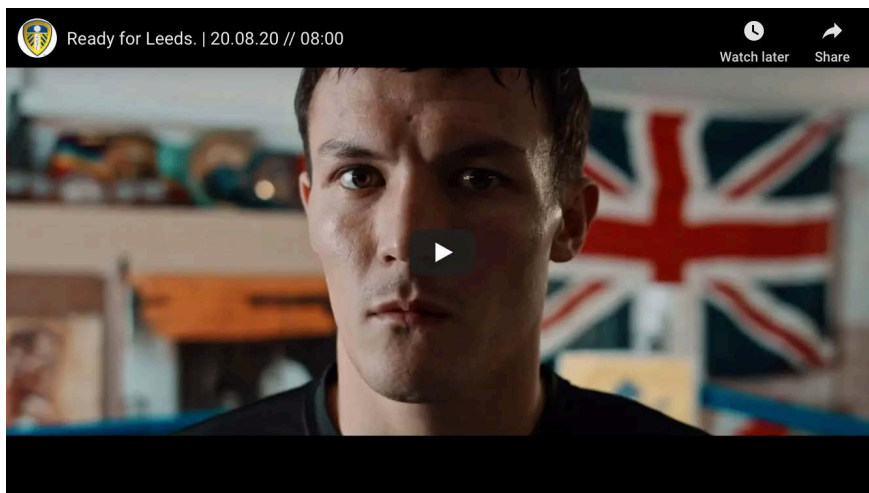
The new home shirt received further promotion a week later through a joint campaign with new sleeve sponsor JD Sports, launched on August 26, led by a spot fronted by midfielder Calvin Phillips.

Outcome

Just 48 hours after the kit launch, record breaking

demand meant most shirt sizes were sold out and the club and supplier had to make an earlier than expected production re-run.

The campaign generated the most viewed content on both the Leeds and adidas UK Twitter channels since 2017. The launch video notched 573,000 in 48 hours and generated more than a million views on Leeds' social channels in the two months after it was posted (led by 661,000 on Twitter, 168,000 on Facebook, 85,000 on Instagram and 63,000 on YouTube). Supporting social racked up a further 200,000 views within two months of the launch.





Shot on iPhone with hockey tape



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

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.





Bud Light & MLB – Take Me Out & #BudLightHomers

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.



KELENDRIA ROWLAND @KELLYROWLAND

I know a few in my household that are excited for sports to be back! They've inspired my twist on the new @BudLight Take Me Out to the Ballgame song. What do you guys think? #TakeMeOutChallenge #sponsored

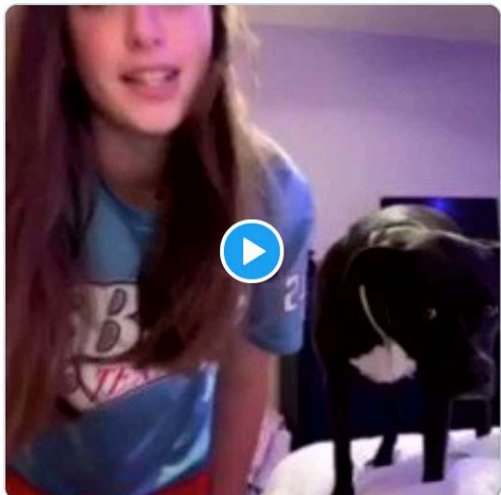
Bud Light @budlight

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

to the ball game.

4:10 PM · Jul 21, 2020

934 193 people are Tweeting about this



coachjsoriano @coachjsoriano

@Baseballism here is some of the Blaze 2024 girls doing the #takemeoutchallenge . We miss being at the ballpark.

2:36 AM · Mar 22, 2020

See coachjsoriano's other Tweets

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



To get 100 beers to
celebrate with your mates



Adopt the Red Keg
for RM500

Carlsberg & Liverpool FC – Virtual Champions Red Keg

Launched on 29 June to celebrate Liverpool's first Premier League title in 30 years, in Malaysia the club's long-time beer sponsor Carlsberg marked the victory with a 'Virtual Champions Keg', redeemable via smartphone.

Objectives

Though Carlsberg has been a Liverpool sponsor since 1992 – the longest running sponsorship in the Premier League – 2019-20 was the first time the club won a Premier League title during the relationship.

Virtual Champions Red Keg was a way to reward Malaysian Liverpool fans with an innovative way to buy beer with which they could raise their glasses to Liverpool FC. The activation aimed to drive sales and raise the beer brand's profile in Malaysia through the surrounding publicity and goodwill.

And it built on Carlsberg's existing 'Adopt a Keg' work in Malaysia – an initiative that sought to address the challenges of pandemic-related restrictions on licensed premises by rewarding consumers who bought a keg with the promise of free draught beer at participating outlets once social distancing restrictions were lifted.

Activation

The joint Carlsberg Malaysia and Grey Malaysia marketing team's idea was to create a 'Virtual Champions Red Keg' campaign to mark the title victory.

This virtual keg – which comes with two limited edition Liverpool FC Carlsberg glasses and contains 100 beers redeemable via any smartphone – was sold for MYR 500 (€103/\$117).

The redemption mechanic sees customers who bought a virtual keg use a QR code on their smartphones at participating bars and restaurants to simply select the number of beers they wish to redeem, up to 31 December 2020. Virtual keg balances can also be shared digitally with other users on Adopt a Keg.

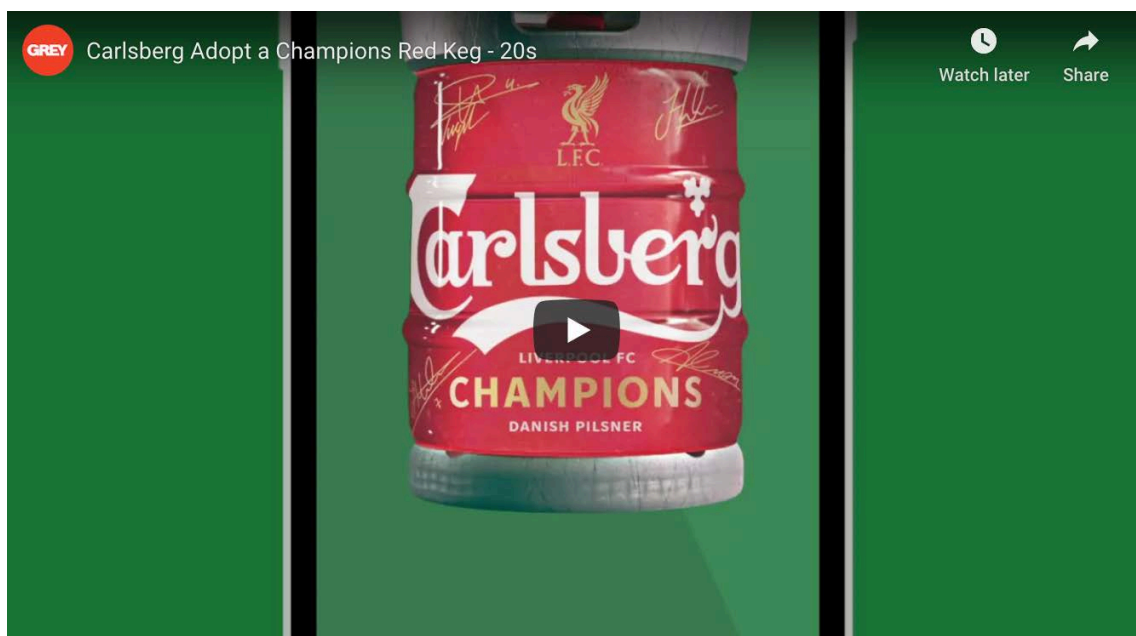
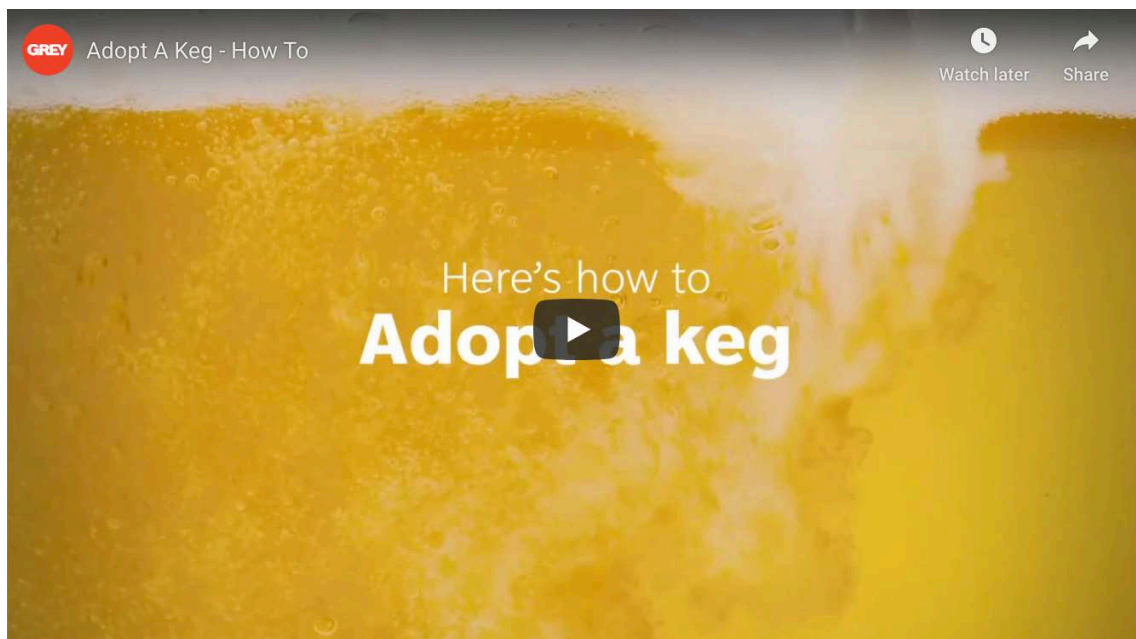
The Virtual Champions Red Keg was available only to the first 100 fans registered via the pre-existing 'Adopt a Keg' programme.

It was promoted through a social media video and

image content campaign spearheaded by a hero online video.

Outcome

All 100 Virtual Champions Red Kegs were sold within a week of the activation launch, while the campaign's social reach saw the video generate 141,672 views on Carlsberg Malaysia's Facebook page within seven days of being posted (with 125 Likes and 46 Shares), plus a further 3,000 Instagram views across five posts.





Castle Lager & the SAFA/SA Rugby – One Nation, One Jersey (One Beer)

In March 2019, Castle Lager leveraged its trio of South African national team sponsorships with a campaign revolving around a bespoke, blended national team jersey that celebrated the country's diversity with live events, experiences, TV and social content and on-pack work.

Objectives

Castle Lager tasked Openfield to create a campaign leveraging all three of its national team sponsorships – with the South Africa Football Association (Bafana Bafana), the South Africa Rugby Union (Springboks) and Cricket South Africa (Proteas) – as they each built up to international tournaments in 2019.

The campaign had to 'harness the collective spirit of the nation's diversity', 'to drive brand love' and 'incentivise beer sales'.

Activation

The core activation idea was to create a bespoke supporters' jersey that carried the logos of all three federations as the centrepiece of a campaign called 'One Nation. One Jersey. One Beer'.

Unveiled in Nelson Mandela Square in Sandton, Johannesburg ahead of Bafana Bafana's Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) qualifier against Libya on 24 March 2019, the campaign shirt was created from a selection of jersey strips from six unifying sporting moments in South Africa: the 1995 Rugby World Cup, the 1996 AFCON win, the 1998 International Cricket Cup Champions Trophy, the 2007 Rugby World Cup, the one-day international where South Africa's cricketers chased a record 438 to win, and the 2010 Football World Cup.

Fronting the jersey reveal and its associated media

and PR Q&A was injured Bafana Bafana goalkeeper Itumeleng Khune and the reveal was followed with a live match viewing event on a giant screen.

All those at the reveal and public viewing event were gifted a 'One Nation One Beer' jersey, while from May 15 fans were able to obtain the jersey by purchasing Castle Beer cans and bottles with the limited edition 'One Nation. One Jersey. One beer' packaging.

To leverage Castle's below-the-line activation of the three sponsorship properties, which included hospitality and influencer marketing, agency Openfield created live brand experiences over the duration of the campaign and also worked on the parallel digital and social amplification strategy which included video, GIFs and still images.

The campaign's 30-second hero video was amplified online and on television.

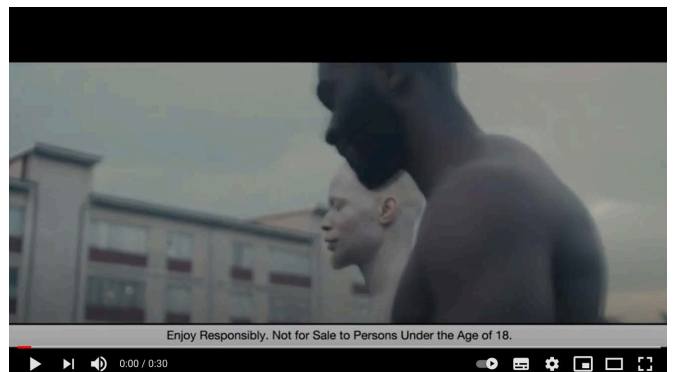
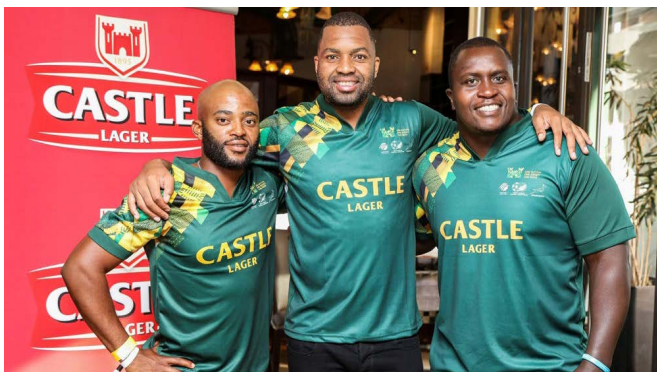
Outcome

According to the agency, the campaign's Brand Marketing Investment (BMI) split was Bafana 22.5%, Springboks 15.4% and Proteas 20.6%.

The activation saw sales of Castle Lager increase 100% over the course of the campaign, against the same period preceding.

Among the campaign metrics were:

- A 20% increase in brand sentiment
- Promotional combo sales bringing an additional R30m (€1.7m/\$2.0m) in revenue
- R96m total PR value (with R10m acquired within two days of launch)
- 2% growth in familiarity & usage in Castle Lager over campaign period (5.1% up v 2018).
- A 4% positive shift in sentiment ('brand representing national pride') v 2018
- A 6% growth in sentiment for 'brand cares for the community'
- A 2% shift in top of mind awareness.



CastleLagerSA @CastleLagerSA

Castle has launched a South African supporters jersey to get everyone behind our national teams who are all playing in major tournaments this year. These jerseys feature a unique design, inspired by the country's 6 biggest sporting moments! #OneNationOneBeer

Enjoy Responsibly. Not for Persons Under the Age of 18.

3:50 PM · Mar 24, 2019

939 391 people are Tweeting about this

CastleLagerSA @CastleLagerSA

We are behind the @OfficialCSA 100%! Show your support for the national heroes and when they make it to the finals we will buy the nation a beer 🇿🇦 #OneNationOneBeer #ProteaFire

Enjoy Responsibly. Not for Persons Under the Age of 18.

11:53 AM · May 30, 2019

698 287 people are Tweeting about this



Cisco & Man City – Blue Moon

Launched to leverage the restart of the Uefa Champions League in 2020, Manchester City official technology partner Cisco rolled out a campaign promoting its Webex video conferencing brand.

Objectives

Cisco's marketing team tasked its agency to place its Premier League club partnership at the heart of a campaign showcasing the benefits of its virtual conferencing technology to demonstrate proof of purpose and drive consideration.

Activation

Octagon's solution to the brief was a campaign based around bringing together distanced City fans from all around the world, all singing the club's famous 'Blue Moon' anthem recorded and produced via Webex.

The activation was launched in late July, timed to leverage spiking interest around the team due to the climax of the Premier League and the early August return of the Uefa Champions League, which saw the club play a last-16 game against Real Madrid.

It was spearheaded by a two-minute hero film featuring a group of global City fans, as well as well-known celebrity supporters Jason Manford and Ricky Hatton, plus women's team stars Steph Houghton and Jill Scott, alongside former men's team stars and club ambassadors Micah Richards and Joleon Lescott.

The video ran across both club and sponsor online platforms and was supported by a shorter, 30-second promo in the immediate build up to Real Madrid game on August 7.

Additional supporting content was led by a further online film showing City players reacting to heartfelt

messages from their fans.

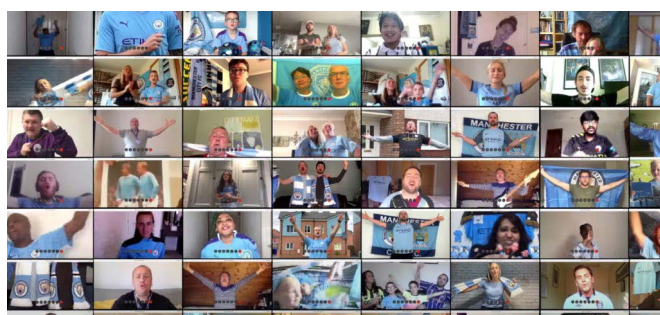
Other City and Cisco Webex collaborations have included a series of Webex hosted 'Watch Together Parties' via the official Manchester City mobile app, while the pitch-side Cisco LED signage has included a giant 'Wonder Wall' which brought fans into the stadium via Cisco Webex to cheer on their team.

Webex also hosted the 2020 iteration of the annual [Cityzen's Giving Young Leaders Summit](#) which virtually brought more than 250 young leaders from 23 cities around the world together to share learnings in community football.

Outcome

Since the campaign launched on July 24, the campaign's social films gave generated more than 2.6 million views.

On City's YouTube channel, the 120-second hero spot notched up 1.1 million views, while the supporting film generated a further 856,878 total views across platforms.



[View More on Instagram](#)

34,142 likes

mancity

👤 C'MON, CITY! 🇬🇧

Thank you to our proud partner @Cisco @Webex for giving City fans a voice ahead of the #UCL return!

#ManCity #LifeOnWebex

[view all 541 comments](#)



Deloitte & the United States Golf Association – U.S. Open AR

Deloitte's activation around the 2020 US Open involved designing an augmented reality app experience for golf fans unable to attend the event due to coronavirus restrictions.

The 2020 US Open was played between 14 and 20 September at Winged Foot Golf Club in Mamaroneck, New York.

Deloitte has been a sponsor of the USGA since 2014. The partnership is a close one, with the brand providing professional services work, field research and reports/studies to help the rights-holder owner 'more effectively pursue its mission of deepening fan engagement in strategic and sustainable ways', 'empower people to connect with its properties in new ways' and 'bring fresh ideas and experiences to the modern golfer and the modern game of golf across the entire ecosystem'

Objectives

For the 120th US Open Championship, Deloitte continued its work on transforming how fans interact with the tournament and set out to link the competition to the fans despite the restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Activation

This objective was spearheaded by Deloitte's development and distribution of an augmented reality (AR) app experience.

The 2020 US Open Augmented Reality (AR) App, launched on 13 September, was available in both the Apple App Store and Google Play Store. To activate the experience users simply needed to download the free app and scan a hard surface (ideally a textured or multi-coloured table, countertop, or desktop), where

Winged Foot would then appear on their phone or tablet screen. Users could then ‘pinch’ the screen to choose any specific hole or player and zoom in and out across the entire course.

The app featured the following experiences:

Live Play: three-dimensional views of all 18 championship holes and near-real-time scores enabling users to watch player shots, see who was playing which hole, where their ball landed, the distance the ball was hit, the distance from the ball to the hole and scoring.

Pick Your Players: a feature enabling users to see how their favourite golfer was performing head-to-head against their rivals – even if they weren’t paired together on the course.

Find a Player: Users could find where their favourite players were playing in AR, track them and view a set of favourite players’ live status and AR play throughout the tournament.

The brand’s marketing campaign around the 2020 tournament began on August 17, with a joint Deloitte

Digital and USGA immersive video commemorating top moments in championship history.

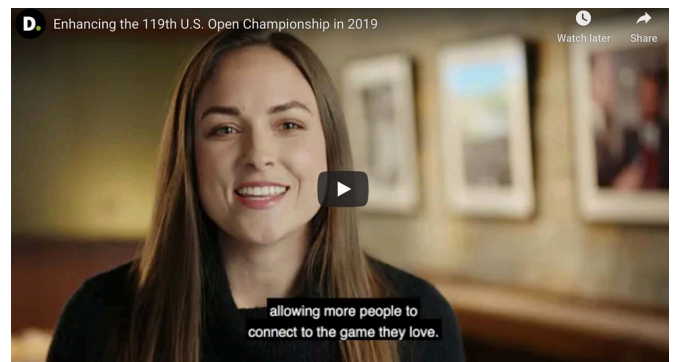
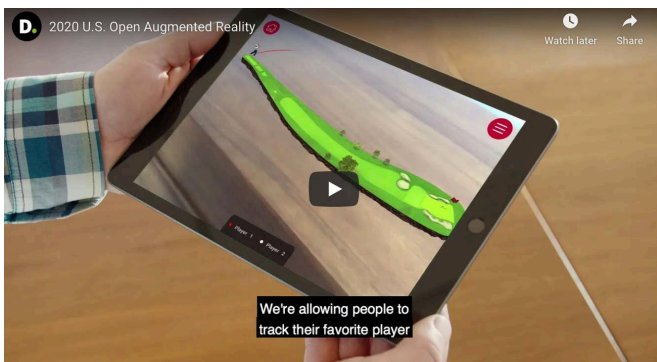
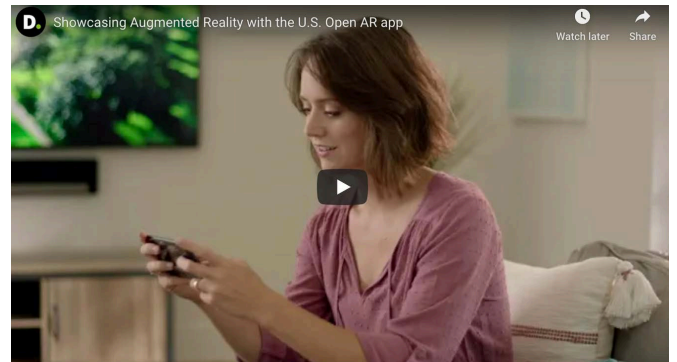
This was followed two weeks later by the campaign specifically promoting the AR Experience. It was led by a hero commercial (running across the brand’s social channels from September 2) highlighting the experience in action and aiming to drive app downloads at <http://www.deloitte.com/usga>.

This lead spot was supported by two further pieces of video content promoting the AR experience, both posted on September 18 across Deloitte’s Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube channels.

Outcome

Among the activation’s metrics were:

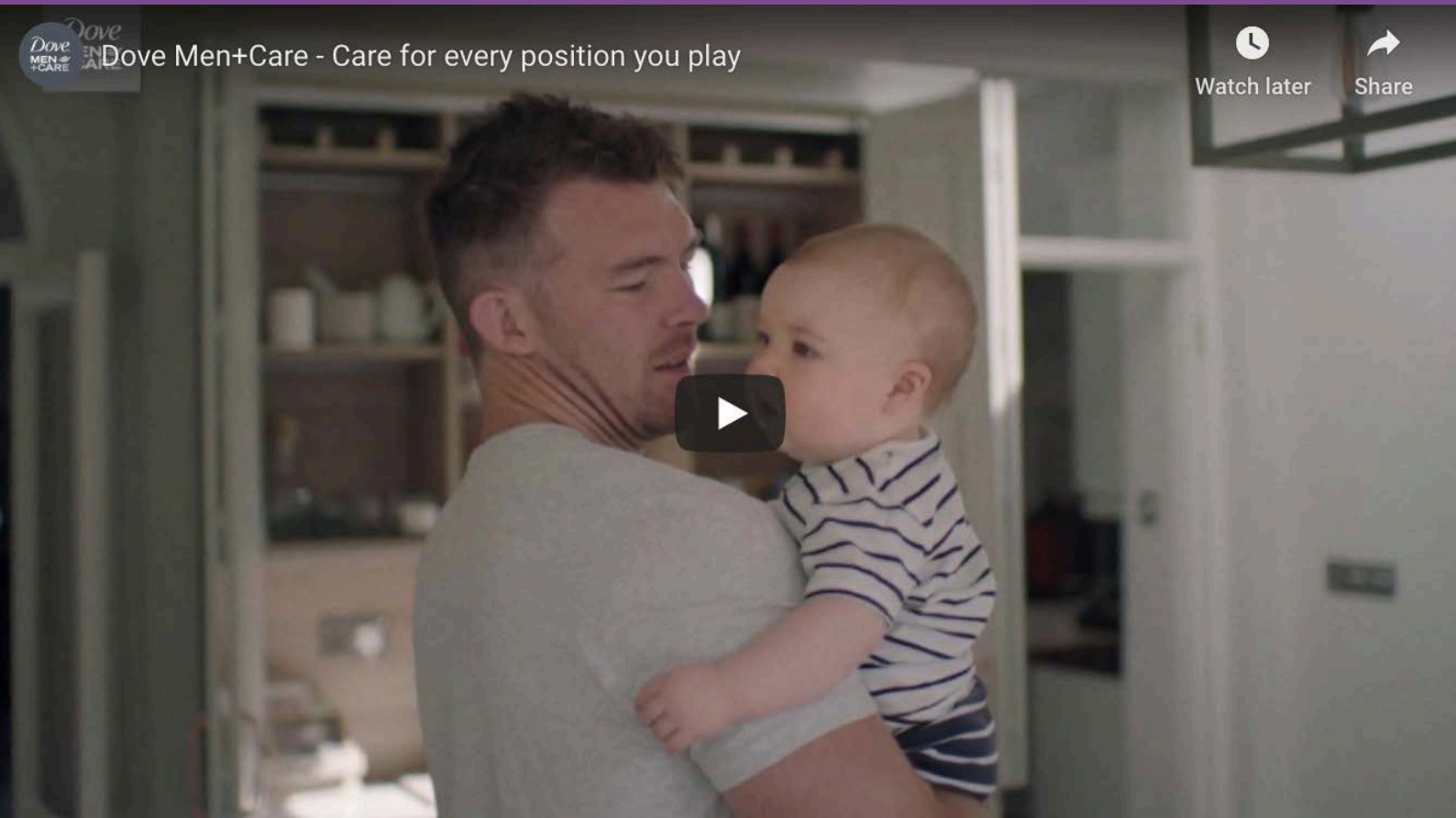
- Total Social Video Views: 11,773
- App Install: 10,000+ on Google Play (between 17 September and 09 October)
- Average App Rating: 2.6 out of 5 (from 211 ratings)





Dove Men+Care - Care for every position you play

Watch later Share



Dove Men+Care & the British & Irish Rugby – Care for Every Position You Play

Dove Men+Care used its rights in deals with the British and Irish rugby unions to create a combined campaign that ran from the 2019 Rugby World Cup to the 2020 Six Nations.

Objectives

Unilever-owned Dove Men+Care is a major rugby sponsor that holds long-running partnerships with England Rugby, Irish Rugby, Scottish Rugby and the Welsh Rugby Union. All the branding in these deals uses a set of identified shared values: respect, honour, family and care.

Ahead the 2019 Rugby World Cup in Japan, Dove sought to consolidate its positioning around these values and promote its new 'sport' product, for after-exercise skincare – not only in the UK and Ireland but across other major rugby markets Argentina,

Australia, Italy and South Africa.

The key objectives were:

- Own a unique brand purpose narrative that differentiated DM+C from competitors
- Drive awareness amongst 35+ year-old men via their rugby passion
- Drive brand equity scores through meaningful content that drives purchasing.

Activation

It leveraged its UK and Ireland union rights and international rugby ambassadors to create 'Care for Every Position You Play': a branded content series celebrating modern men caring for others – particularly parenting.

Documentary-style social spots featured England's Courtney Lawes, Scotland's Stuart Hogg, Ireland's

Peter O'Mahony and Wales captain Alun Wyn Jones with their families. This was blended with archive match footage obtained through the brand's rights to the Six Nations.

The output was turned into a set of ATL & BTL assets launched across broadcast, social and digital platforms in September 2019, as the teams headed to Japan.

The series ran organically across the brand's own social channels, with home union and ambassador personal channel support combined with an integrated paid and earned media plan.

The initial player-specific spots were supported by reactive content created with players' families during the tournament.

The campaign content was then re-edited to run ahead of the start of the Six Nations at the end of January 2020, as Dove activated its new partnership with the tournament.

It was followed up later in the Six Nations, in March 2020, with a #Championsofcare competition, offering fans a chance to win a pair of tickets (for home matches of the winners' choice) to a home fixture in every round of the 2020 Autumn Tests. Supporting prizes including signed rugby jerseys and Dove Men+Care product hampers.

To 'celebrate care on and off the pitch', participants were asked to choose their favourite of four Six Nations moments: 'a debut try and a hug in the



stands', 'victory celebrations shared with the family, 'a lucky fan receiving a post-match gift' and 'post-match cuddles with the family'.

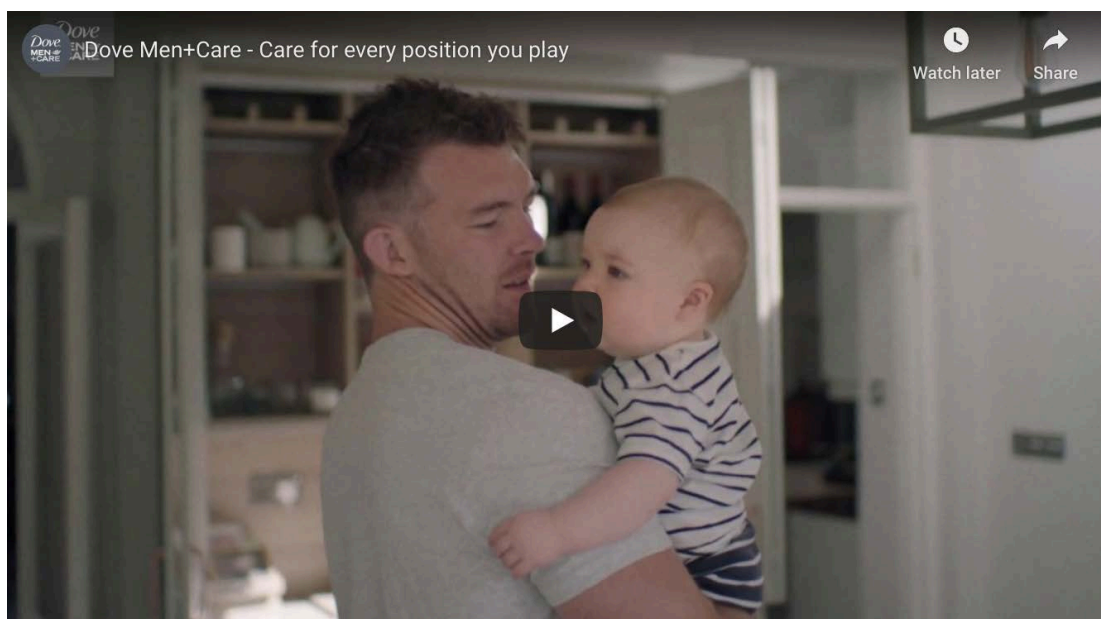
Outcome

Brand awareness grew 10 per cent during the months the campaign ran, and underlying sales grew 18 per cent in the UK in 2019.

CSM reports that the activation's combined reach

was 176 million with a paid media reach to the target audience of 126 million and an organic reach of more than 50 million.

The campaign's success led to the renewal of the brand's rugby partnerships beyond 2020 and has become a best practice example for other Unilever brands on how to blend product and purpose through branded content.





**KNOW A KEY WORKER
YOU'D LIKE TO THANK?**



Evian & the AELTC – Thank You Key Workers

With Wimbledon 2020 cancelled due to Covid-19, Official Water Evian rewarded UK heroes fighting the pandemic with a ticket/experience giveaway for the 2021 tournament.

Objectives

Evian has been the Official Water of The Championships, Wimbledon since 2008. The objective of its 2020 activation campaign was to engage consumers around Wimbledon – despite its pandemic-enforced cancellation – in a way contextually relevant to the Covid-19 summer.

Activation

The activation was based around a campaign inviting key worker nominations (via social and print) for a chance to win a pair of show court tickets to

Wimbledon 2021. The winner would be a guest of Evian, with access to the brand's Wimbledon hospitality suite for a day (complete with lunch, drinks and afternoon tea).

The campaign was activated through four main channels:

- Evian's social channels
- Wimbledon's social channels
- Evian ambassadors and influencers
- PR

On the Evian side, the campaign focused on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, including organic and paid posts.

The brand's athlete ambassador Kyle Edmund and group of influencers – Ashley James, Emma Louise Connolly and Leomie Anderson – also posted content in a social strand led by two Instagram stories and

one Instagram feed post all asking followers to enter the Evian competition.

The initiative was supported across the rights-holder's channels with Wimbledon reposting the brand influencer posts on its Instagram feed and Twitter account.

The PR push included two media partnership competitions, with *OK and Marie Claire*, and a series of ambassador media interviews.

Outcome

Among the initiative's topline results was a total reach of 155 million and substantial UK media coverage across a range of mainstream, sports, female-focused and marketing titles and channels including *The Sunday Times, The Sun, Mail Online, Sky Sports News and Marketing Week*.

The digital campaign saw a reach of 3.9 million, 68,000 engagements and 11,000 competition entries. The PR element had a reach of 151 million.



NHS staff and all key workers definitely deserve a big thank you. Usually at this time of year we would be enjoying The Championships [🎾](#), [Wimbledon](#) as official water of the event. With the event cancelled, we have decided to do something different. We are giving away tickets to The Championships, Wimbledon 2021 to key workers, including an



Grant Thornton & the PGA Tour/The Players Championship – Swing

Grant Thornton leveraged its rights at the 2020 Players Championship with a Rickie Fowler-fronted ad campaign.

Objectives

Grant Thornton inked a trio of partnerships – with the PGA Tour, the Players Championship tournament, and with golfer Rickie Fowler – in December 2017.

The accountancy firm saw the assets unlocked – a broad on-course presence, hospitality opportunities and advertising around telecasts on the Golf Channel and NBC that could be led by one of the world's top players – as a means to position itself as a transformational, convention-challenging business.

Grant Thornton's strategy is based on research showing business customers 'have grown weary of a sea of sameness' when it comes to a services industry

dominated by the 'Big Four'. As the fifth largest player in the category, Grant Thornton positions itself as the challenger.

In 2018, the rights were activated ahead of the Players with a Fowler-fronted ad campaign called 'Jargon Caddie' that dovetailed with the brand's umbrella 'Status Go' brand platform.

In March 2019, it took the form of two TV and online 30-second spots aired during the Players: 'Tailor' and 'Lobster'.

In 2020, the activation set out to encourage prospects to 'Go Fearlessly' among the uncertain business environment by picking Grant Thornton.

Activation

For the 2020 Players, Gyro created an activation programme spanning TV, online, social media and

digital components that continued the ongoing 'Status Go' brand platform and was again led by a hero spot starring Fowler – this time called 'Swing'.

The 30-second ad parodied slow play in golf and acted as a business analogy for being too afraid to act in times of uncertainty.

It debuted during NBC's broadcast of the Honda Classic and continued through Spring 2020, culminating at the 2020 Players Championship.

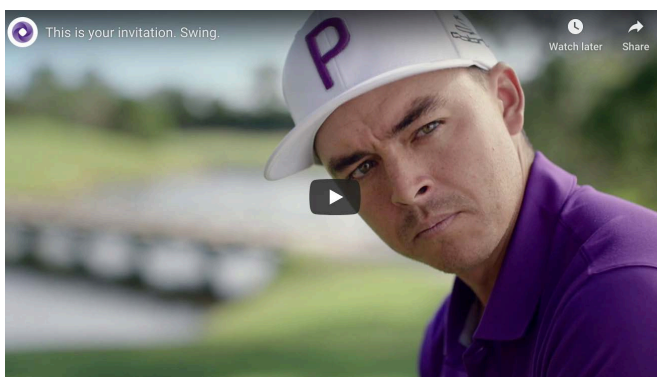
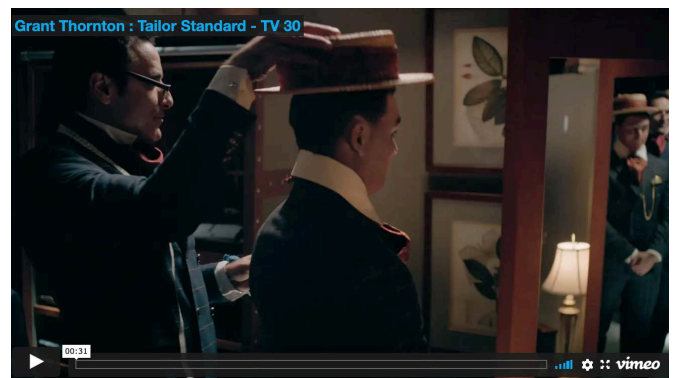
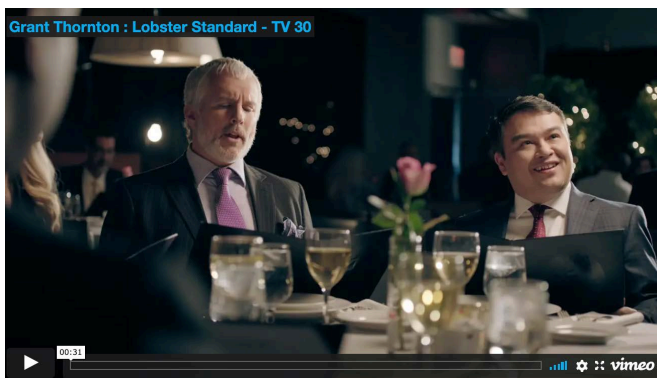
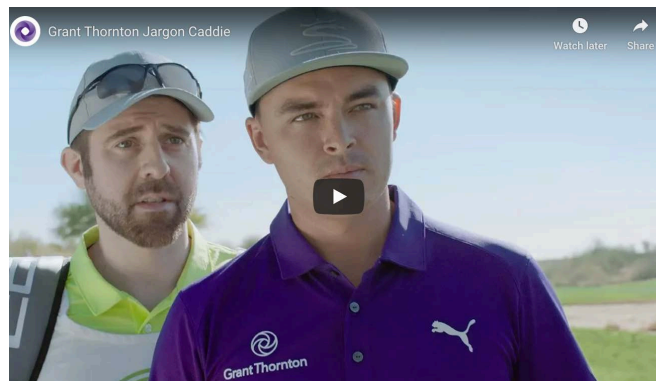
The lead commercial was supported by a social spot posted on 4 March 2020 specifically leveraging the brand's Players partnership, called 'Welcome to The PLAYERS Championship', which celebrated the fifth anniversary of Fowler's thrilling 2015 tournament victory with a lookback at some of its most daring moments.

As well as the ad campaign, the multi-touchpoint activation included email marketing, a client and target client hospitality game/culture experience, at-event entertainment and refreshment as well as print assets, chalet graphics, web banners, landing page, social content and CEO message videos.

Outcome

According to Grant Thornton, the activation's Net Promoter Score (the percentage of customers rating their likelihood to recommend a company) was 100 (with a 97.5% client satisfaction rate).

The campaign generated more than 332 million PR impressions, while the client programme engaged 384 executives and the activation's Return On Marketing Investment (ROMI) was \$14.9m.





IBM & the AELTC – The Greatest Championships

Technology partner IBM helped the AELTC deliver a digital experience to help Wimbledon fans bereft at the Covid-enforced cancellation of the 2020 tournament.

The rapid spread of the novel coronavirus in the UK forced the cancellation of The Championships, Wimbledon 2020 in April – the first time it had been cancelled since World War II.

But the AELTC's pandemic insurance policy partly shielded it from the devastating financial damage many other global sports events suffered from Covid-19, and also enabled it to focus on creating 'The Greatest Championships': a collaboration with long-time technology partner IBM in the form of a free-to-access content campaign connecting with fans across what would have been the two weeks of the event, in a round-by-round retelling of some of Wimbledon's best matches.

Objectives

The objective was to create a two-week fan engagement initiative that would enable the AELTC to continue to promote the Wimbledon brand and build its reputation even in the absence of live tennis.

The idea behind 'The Greatest Championships' was to create something that felt a little like a live tournament – one that offered sports fan an active engagement experience rather than simply archive footage.

Other aims were to create a Wimbledon celebration for fans missing the tournament and to provide 'a positive connection to happier times for millions of tennis fans around the world'.

Activation

'The Greatest Championships' was a tournament

digital recreation – running from 28 June to 13 July – based around a round-by-round video-led compilation of Wimbledon's greatest matches, which IBM digitally enhanced using AI/Cloud computing.

It was distributed in real-time across multiple platforms – including Wimbledon's digital and social channels as well on its broadcaster partner networks (led by the BBC) through what would have been the two weeks of the 2020 tournament.

To replicate the Wimbledon experience, IBM took match video and added presentation pieces, player biographies, game-related statistics, point-by-point commentary, highlights clips, background stories and supporting photography, complete with a Wimbledon studio with talent, legends of the game and player interviews.

The planning phase was informed by a June 2020 YouGov survey of 2,000 UK adults, commissioned by IBM and the AELTC, which uncovered an appetite for re-watching classic sports matches and events: 20 per cent were interested in doing so, and of those 89 per cent believed new technology could play a part in making them more engaging (62 per cent wanted remastered picture quality, 40 per cent modern statistics and 42 per cent access additional archive content).

A 10-strong IBM team had eight weeks to put the content together and create the delivery platform. The work ranged from de-blurring archive footage to assessing levels of on-court excitement based on crowd noise, allowing viewers to navigate the most enthralling portions of a match.

To create a sense of anticipation ahead of the two-week initiative, the project was promoted with a

campaign spanning digital and social content, as well as a PR push and ambassador support.

UK public-service broadcaster the BBC co-hosted 'The Greatest Championships' by showcasing the greatest matches across its linear channels during the 2020 fortnight.

For IBM, the suite of 'The Greatest Championships' content included assets for both internal and external audiences, as well as sales enablement, which showcased the gamut of technology and services IBM offers.

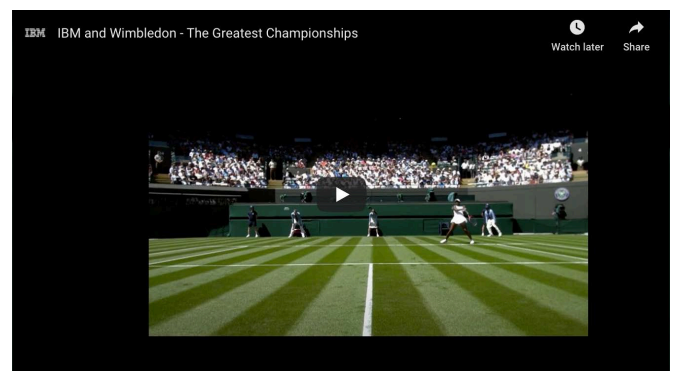
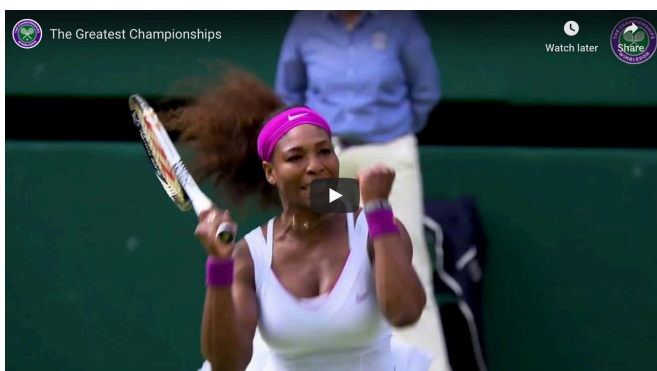
This included an overarching hero documentary, and five short-form videos that focused on different aspects of the partnership's commitment to innovation, featuring interviews with team members from the AELTC and IBM, plus archive footage.

Outcome

In just eight weeks, the joint IBM and Wimbledon team created a digital fan experience that filled the gap left by the fortnight and was, according to the rights-holder, 'hugely positively received by Wimbledon fans all around the world'.

Amongst the social statistics associated with IBM's campaign over the fortnight was a 11.4 million total reach and more than 22,000 video views across its own channels.

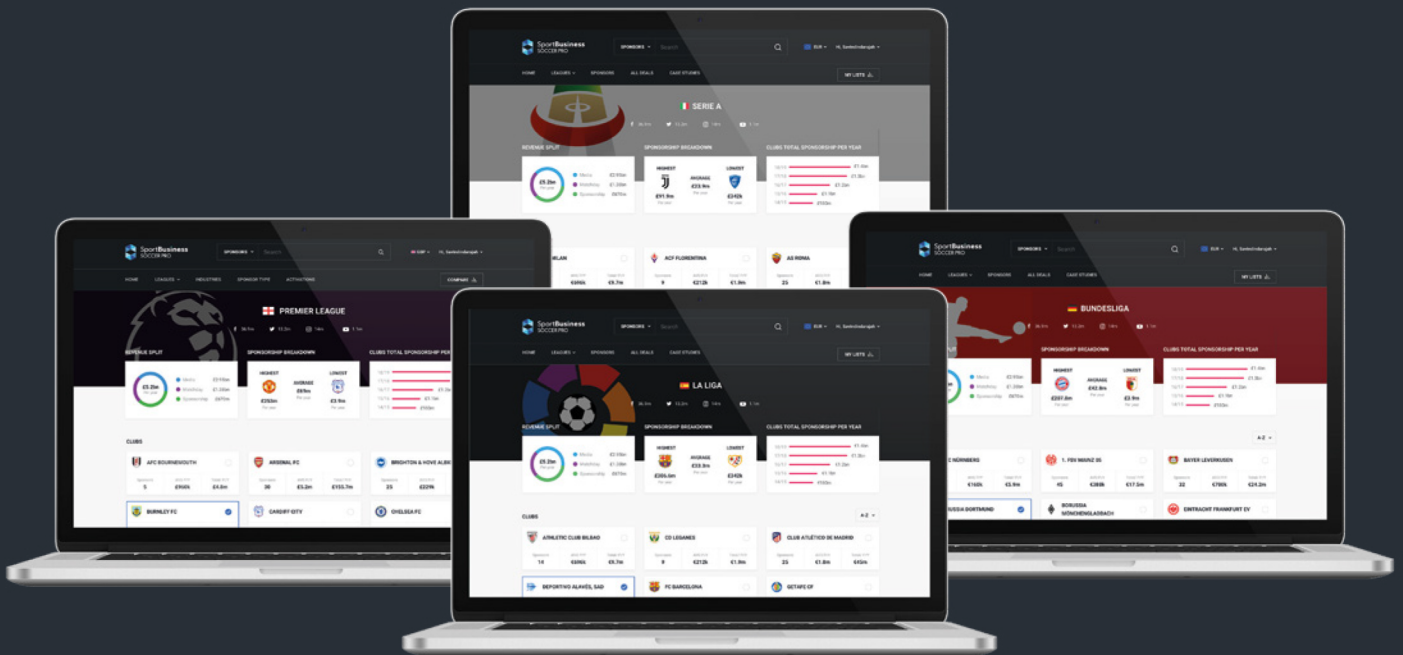
A YouGov survey conducted following the 2020 fortnight indicated that the AELTC and IBM's efforts ensured that Wimbledon maintained its reputation at 2019 levels. Even with no live coverage, the efforts attracted roughly 20 per cent of Wimbledon's usual audience.





SportBusiness
SOCCER

2,500 DEALS, 78 CLUBS, 4 TOP LEAGUES, 1 DIGITAL PLATFORM



The future of football sponsorship data

Contact us now for a personalised demo and to discuss how a paid-for subscription to SportBusiness Soccer can help you gain a competitive advantage.

Web: www.sportbusiness.com/soccerpro

Email: soccerpro@sportbusiness.com

Call: +44 (0)20 7265 4100



Joma & Villarreal CF – Our Colours, Our Skin

Villarreal CF and technical partner Joma's July 2020 triple kit launch campaign leveraged lockdown social media creative trends and focused on digital assets to drive online sales.

Objectives

Ahead of Villarreal's final game of the coronavirus-delayed 2020 season, kit supplier Joma rolled out a campaign to drive awareness and sales of the club's new 2020/21 season home, away and third kit launch.

Activation

'Our Colours, Our Skin' was based around a set of 10 creative pieces amplified across both brand and club's digital and social platforms and supported by a PR launch. It was fronted by stars from the men's and women's teams.

The campaign debuted on July 15 and sought to drive viewers to pre-order and/or purchase online as the new kits went on sale 24 hours later the club's online store.

A traditional digital photo gallery was hosted on both the club and the brand's websites, while the campaign was spearheaded by a 40-second hero split screen spot that leveraged the Covid-19 lockdown social video trend for editing multiple clips together to make it seem like the players are passing a ball (in this case a 'shirt') from one person to the next.

The launch video was posted simultaneously across the club's Facebook, Instagram and YouTube channels.

It was supported by set of additional graphic, Gif and photo content assets which were posted over the following 48 hours.

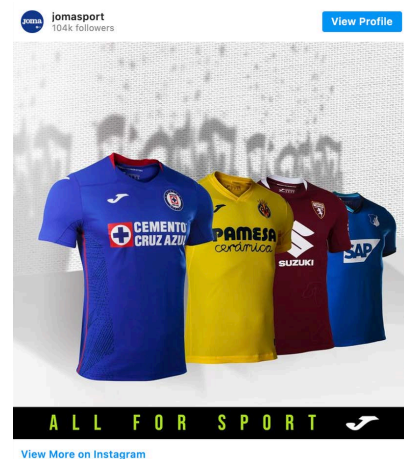
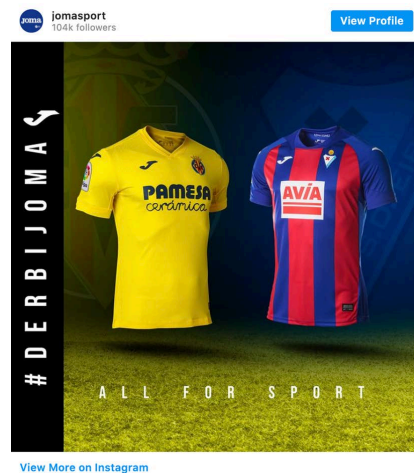
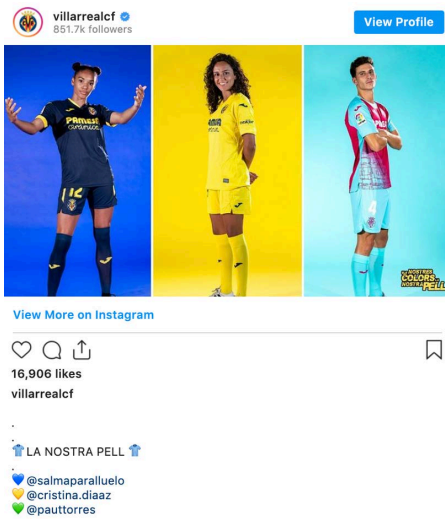
Joma has continued to promote its kits during the 2020-21 season every time two of its partner clubs go head-to-head, under its umbrella 'All For Sport' brand platform.

Outcome

The joint kit launch campaign generated a combined reach of more than 2.5 million across Villarreal and

Joma's online platforms and notched up more than 100,000 views across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube.

The club's own Instagram feed generated the most views (73,000) of any single platform, while the hero spot generated 35,000 views on the club's channels (23,000 on Instagram, 10,000 on Facebook and 2,000 on YouTube).





Kia & Uefa – Trophy Tour/Heroes Walk/OMBC/Undeniable

Objectives

The overall objective of Kia's 2018-19 to 2020-2021 Europa League sponsorship has been to build brand familiarity among new audiences globally and particularly in Europe (a key region for the automaker), while the activation's umbrella purpose and key communication message is that Kia supports and empowers football fans around the world.

Activation

Through the 2019-20 Europa League, Kia's activation programme was built on four strands:

- Trophy Tour #TheDreamPass
- Heroes Walk @ Home
- Virtual OMBC
- Undeniable

Trophy Tour

Through the Uefa Europa League Trophy Tour Kia sought to bring the cup itself to fans across Europe, and **once again** partnered with the Uefa Foundation for Children to collect and donate football boots to children in the Za'atari Refugee Camp in Jordan.

The initiative originally spanned multiple physical tour stops with the trophy and a team of local player ambassadors (including Michael Owen, Thomas Berthold, Eric Abidal, Francesco Totti, Rafael van de Vaart, Patrice Evra and Jerzy Dudek), while related content was shared globally across Kia and UEFA channels, as well as via press partnerships and third party platforms (including DAZN & [goal.com](https://www.goal.com)).

But, after physical stops in Barcelona and Frankfurt, Covid-19 halted the physical tour and its planned stops in Amsterdam, Manchester, Rome and Warsaw,

and the initiative moved online.

Kia worked with Innocean Worldwide and Right Formula on the restructured trophy tour, which had a specific focus on Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Spain and the UK.

Kia used its ambassadors to host online soccer classes for their respective countries, performing a set of soccer skills challenges and sharing their hopes and dreams with the kids from the refugee camp.

Hero's Walk @ Home

One of Kia's core UEL rights is the Official Match Ball Carrier (OMBC) program, which it brings to life at every match throughout the tournament. Various mechanics are deployed to select the children to participate through a programme organised by the clubs & charities, dealer use etc.

At the start of this activation strand Kia created a video series called the Hero's Walk which saw the brand share the stories of its young OMBC's across its social channels.

When the pandemic hit, the brand brought in

Dugout to surprise some very disappointed children with video and phone calls from some of their favourite players/ambassadors to make up for missing their on-pitch physical appearance, in a reworked initiative called 'Hero's Walk @ Home'.

Three young OMBCs (in Italy, Spain and the UK) got surprise phone calls from Bruno Fernandes, Esteban Cambiasso & Luis Fabiano, with the resulting content was shared globally across Kia channels and amplified via press and third-party partner channels.

Final VOMBC

As the host city – Cologne for the 2019-20 after the pandemic forced a switch from Gdańsk – selects the ball carrier for the final, Kia worked closely with charity Deutsches Kinderhilfswerk to identify a child, and selected 10-year-old Justus, who has Asperger's and Tourette syndrome.

But with pandemic regulations blocking Justus from attending the match, Kia worked with Uefa and agencies Innocean and Right Formula to set up a two-way virtual reality experience for him instead.



To replace the tunnel experience, a screen and 360-degree camera pairing was installed at the stadium tunnel and Justus was given a VR headset which enabled him to greet the players and official as they arrived, and then interact with the Inter Milan and Sevilla players in the tunnel – all guided virtually by German icon and Kia ambassador Michael Ballack.

The resulting content was again shared globally across Kia and Uefa channels, as well as through PR, media partnerships and third-party partners (including goal.com).

Undeniable

Working with Bleacher Report, Kia sought to celebrate the 'Undeniable' passion of football fandom and acknowledge the efforts fans have made during Covid-19.

The car sponsor partnered with B/R and to identify fans in several markets who had done various things to support one another and their community – such as raising money during lockdown or speaking out

about important topics such as mental health during challenging times.

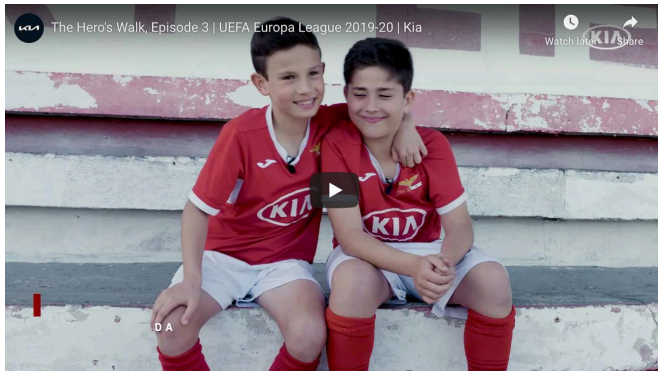
Kia decided to reward these fans for their efforts by donating equipment to their local clubs and giving them a special experience led by ambassador and Manchester United star Juan Mata (who was chosen to front this activation strand due his personal charitable commitment with Common Goal).

This also saw the auto brand create related content pieces and share them across Kia , Uefa and Bleacher Report channels.

Outcomes

The 'Trophy Tour' activation strand generated more than 18.5m engagements and more than 2,000 boot donations.

Meanwhile the #TheDreampass hero video (posted on July 29) generated more than 10,000 views on Kia's YouTube and Facebook channels and the VOMBC content generated more than two million social media views.





OFFICIAL SPONSOR OF THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Lowes & the NFL – Home is What Unites Us

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

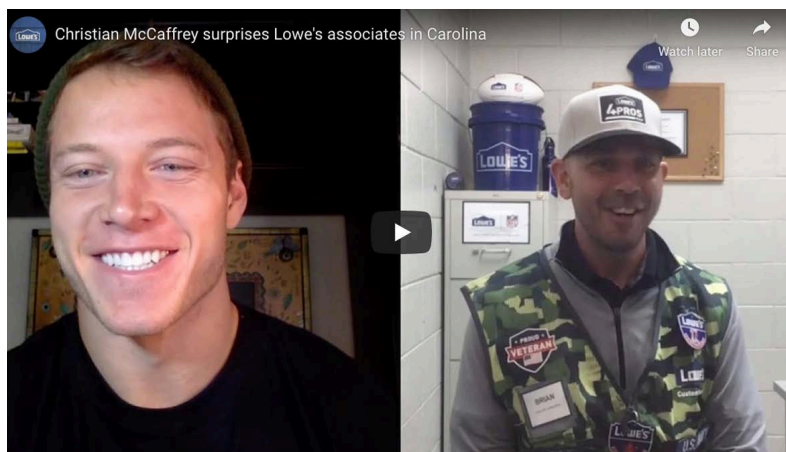
television commercials airing during the official Draft telecast, which all celebrated the comforts of home and reflected disrupted routines and quieter days.

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).



joeyb_9 1.2m followers [View Profile](#)

Joe Burrow is about to receive a call he'll never forget.



[View More on Instagram](#)

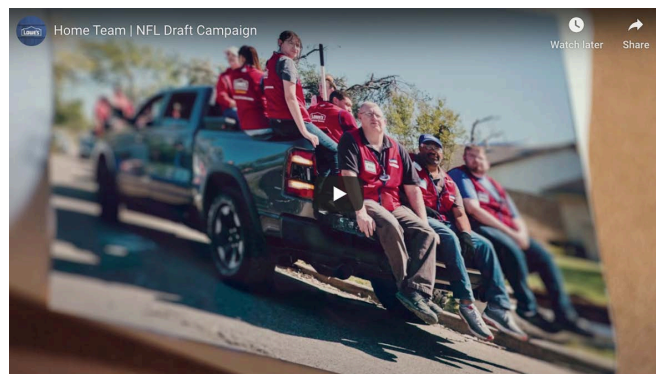
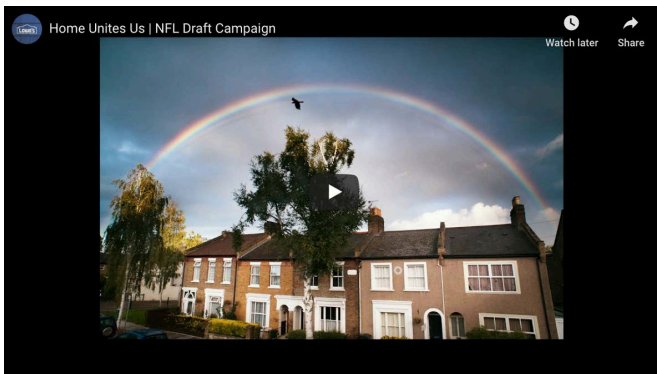
130,547 likes

joeyb_9

As I look forward to getting a call I'll never forget later this week, I wanted to call a few special people at @loweshomeimprovement in my hometown to thank them for everything they do for our community, staying strong in good times and bad. It's hardworking folks like these who make me so proud to be from Athens, OH #HomeUnitesUs #LowePartner

view all 2,182 comments

Add a comment...





THE e-OPEN

PRESENTED BY



 **WGT.** BY TOPGOLF

Mastercard & the R&A – The e-Open

On the weekend that would have hosted the cancelled 2020 Open, Mastercard took presenting partner rights to the final of the R&A's 'e-Open'.

Objectives

During the pandemic-enforced pause in live sports, Mastercard needed to create new ways of delivering its brand goal of giving people once-in-a-lifetime moments.

Priceless Experiences became Digital Priceless Experiences, and the e-Open was designed to fit into this series and replace some of the opportunities Mastercard would have had around the real thing.

For Mastercard the objective behind partnering with the e-Open, as with other eSports, was primarily to provide exclusive 'priceless' gaming experiences for its customers and stakeholders and secondarily to

build the brand position and engagement with GenZ/ Millennials.

Activation

The virtual 18-hole stroke play tournament took place on a version of the iconic Royal St George's (the course which was to host the 2020 Open), as rendered through Topgolf's online multiplayer virtual golf game *World Golf Tournament*, between July 13 and September 8.

The whole project was preceded by a virtual exhibition match, presented by Mastercard, between Mastercard golf ambassadors Justin Rose and Graham McDowell on April 21. The two major champions' nine holes at a virtual Pebble Beach was livestreamed on YouTube.

The livestream was hosted by golf personality Matt

Ginella, who provided shot-by-shot commentary and chatted with the two pro players about the match and their memories of the course where McDowell won the 2010 US Open and about how they are spending their time during lockdown.

To further complement the effort and enhance the cardholder experience, the event also featured the opportunity for fans watching the contest to share questions with Rose and McDowell during the match. In addition, a select number of lucky Mastercard cardholders redeemed personalized video messages from McDowell through Priceless.com.

The e-Open itself teed off with qualifying events from July 13 before proceeding to knock-out rounds and culminating with the final on September 8.

A promotional campaign ran across R&A, Mastercard and Topgolf channels. It set out to invite the world's gamers and golfers to test themselves on the virtual links and incentivised participation through a range of prizes from a Tom Watson-signed Callaway golf bag to an all-expenses paid trip to The 149th Open at Royal St George's in 2021.

To enter players simply needed to visit the e-tournament hub at theopen.com/the-eopen-2020 and sign-up.

Mastercard and Octagon also created in-game

activations, such as a registered customers being able to play with Mastercard-branded balls that emitted the Mastercard sonic logo when struck during the game.

The e-Open presented by Mastercard final was streamed on September 8 in a 90-minute live video event hosted by Rick Shiels and Seb Carmichael Brown, with expert analysis from Rose.

Leading WGT players 'fmagnets' and 'WedgyAZ' went head-to-head and it was UK player FMagnets who won the competition, scooped the all-expenses paid trip to the 149th Open next year and received a personal congratulations video message from Rose.

Outcome

The R&A reports that more than 145,000 people competed in the inaugural e-Open, beating its 100,000 target.

Content across the brand and property channels between July and September achieved social media reach of more than a million. The e-Open final livestream attracted 222,000 views on YouTube and 21,000 on Facebook, while the earlier exhibition between Rose and McDowell was viewed by 361,000 on YouTube.





Official Beer Sponsor of the NBA



Michelob Ultra & the NBA – The Return & #UltraCourtside

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.

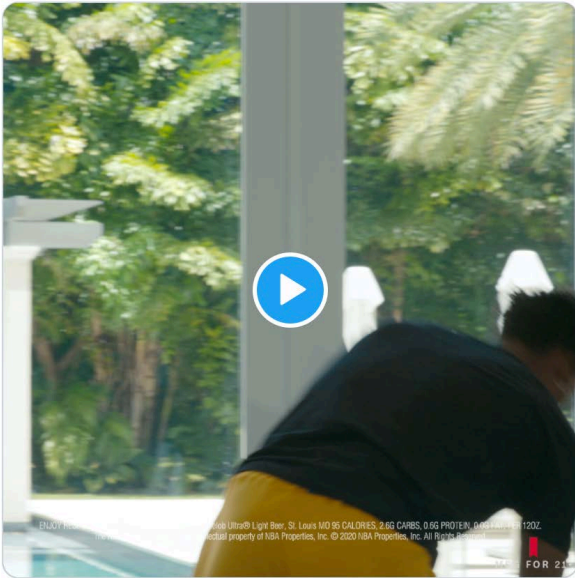
Ultra Courtside was promoted socially and via a video narrated by [Chicago Bulls legend Scottie Pippen](#).

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).

Michelob ULTRA @MichelobULTRA

We got to hang with @JimmyButler as he packed for the NBA bubble...he was pretty excited. What’s one thing you’d HAVE to pack for life in the bubble? Sorry, we don’t currently offer travel-size ULTRA.



8:00 PM · Jul 22, 2020

357 68 people are Tweeting about this

Michelob ULTRA @MichelobULTRA

The @NBA Season is here! Who’s going to the Finals? Possibly you. Reply with #ULTRACourtside and #Sweepstakes for a chance to win 2 virtual courtside seats to the NBA Finals.



7:39 PM · Jul 30, 2020

1.3K 1.9K people are Tweeting about this





Mountain Dew & the NBA – Joel is Not Happy

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

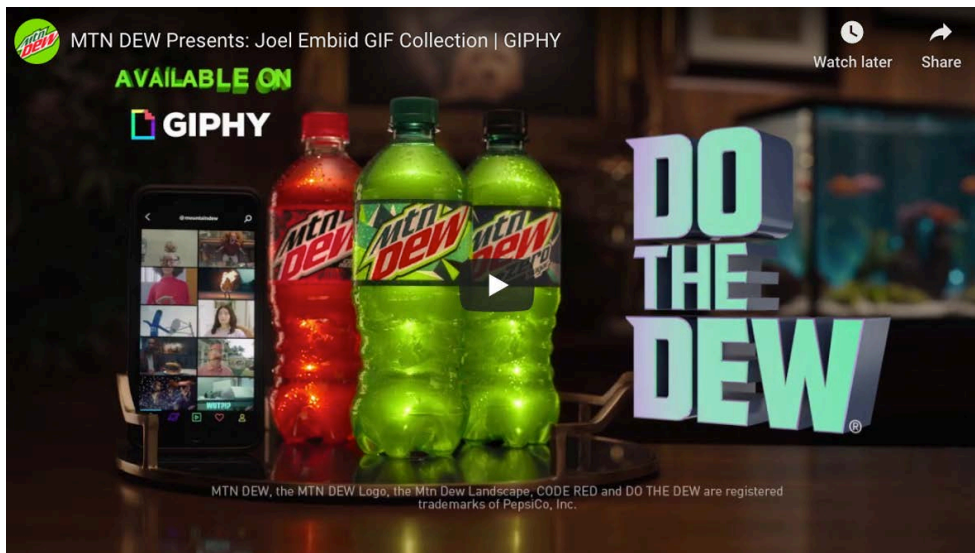
Mountain Dew believed he deserved better ones.

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.



via GIPHY



TRIKOT 2020|21

KEIN BRIMBORIUM.



WAS BLEIBT, SIND UNSERE WERTE.
WAS FEHLT, SEID IHR.



Nike & VfL Bochum – No Fuss. Football as It Should Be

German second division football club Bochum and Nike's campaign promoting their 2020-21 jersey led to tripling the previous season's shirt sales and generating record revenue even without fans in the stadium or the physical club shop.

Objectives

The objective of the campaign was to drive sales of the new 2020-21 home kit of 2. Bundesliga club VfL Bochum (which is based in the city of Bochum, North Rhine-Westphalia).

The brief was to launch the campaign and boost purchasing ahead of the August 15 friendly game against KFC Uerdingen 05, when the team wore the new kit for the first time.

Activation

According to VfL Bochum marketing director Christoph Wortmann, when the club's marketing team was planning the campaign they asked themselves one key question: "How can we go to market with a message and with content that reinforces our values and which will also be widely shared by and among the fan base?"

The idea of 'no fuss' emerged as one that reflected the club's DNA and was also in keeping with the pandemic era. With this idea in mind, VfL ran a six-agency call in mid-June, which was won by the Dortmund agency Beyer G6rges.

Beyer G6rges based the campaign around the three values established in the club's 2007 brand concept: 'down to earth', 'approachable' and 'authentic'.

Launched at the end of July 2020 and running through the first weeks of August, 'No fuss. Football as it should be' was primarily a digital initiative as online was identified as the key media channel in a period where no fans were allowed in the stadium and thus footfall in the club shop was minimal).

As well as reflecting the club's values, the creative also referenced the 'floodlight blue' shirt colour and linked it to the image of the floodlight masts in the Vonovia Ruhrstadion, which can be seen from afar when approaching the stadium.

The launch PR statement said: "For more than 40 years, the floodlights of the Ruhrstadion have shone beyond the city limits of Bochum. A light that never goes out. Floodlight blue. And this is exactly how the new jersey of VfL Bochum 1848 for the 2020/21 season is presented. "

Led by video and photography, the bespoke website landing page and social content was supported by local print and OOH poster strands, plus PR work.

The campaign's debut content pieces feature striker Simon Zoller and fullback Danilo Soares wearing the new shirts.

Initially teased by floodlight-focused imagery across the club's and the sportswear brand's social channels from July 27, the 60-second hero spot – featuring footage from the 1980s to the present day – was posted across its online platforms on August 5.

The spearhead video was then supported by a set of social and OOH executions.

Outcome

Within a month of launch, the jersey campaign reached more than half a million fans on VfL's social networks.

The campaign had a significant effect on shirt sales figures and tripled jersey sales compared with the previous season's merchandise figures. The jersey went on sale on July 29 and within a month the Bochum-based club had already sold more than 3,500.

The sales statistics are all the more impressive because the traditional main sales channel – in person trade in the club shop – was a non-factor, with the shop closed and games played behind closed doors due to the coronavirus pandemic.





VfL Bochum 1848
@VfLBochum1848eV



Ein Trikot, geprägt von einer Zeit, als Fußball einfach nur Fußball war.

Noch bis heute 23:59 Uhr das neue Trikot vorbestellen

bit.ly/Blindkauf_2020

#VfLutlicht #flutlichtblau



9:00 AM · Jul 31, 2020



38 See VfL Bochum 1848's other Tweets



Simon Zoller
@SiZolli



#Bermudadreieck @VfLBochum1848eV #meinVfL



7:54 PM · Aug 7, 2020



176 See Simon Zoller's other Tweets



VfL Bochum 1848
@VfLBochum1848eV



bit.ly/VfL-Trikots_20...

Unser Trikot verbindet Tradition und modernes Design.

Unser Fußball, wie wir ihn immer geliebt haben: bodenständig, ehrlich, leidenschaftlich. Ohne großen Schnickschnack. Dafür steht das Trikot 2020|21.

#VfLutlicht #flutlichtblau #tricorpworkwear



10:28 AM · Aug 5, 2020



106 16 people are Tweeting about this



VfL Bochum 1848
@VfLBochum1848eV



Wer hat's schon im Kleiderschrank? Flutlichtblau Hell oder Dunkel? 🤔

bit.ly/VfL-Trikots_20...

#VfLutlicht #flutlichtblau #tricorpworkwear



6:46 PM · Aug 11, 2020



44 See VfL Bochum 1848's other Tweets



PreZero & TSG 1899 Hoffenheim – #SauberesSpiel/#CleanGame

In October and November 2019, Hoffenheim naming rights partner PreZero ran an eco-focused activation around the club's home game against Paderborn to deliver the first carbon-neutral Bundesliga match.

Objectives

Recycling and waste disposal company PreZero's 2020-21 to 2024-25 deal with Hoffenheim includes stadium naming rights and a range of other assets from branding and player access to ticketing and hospitality – plus the promotion of mineral water brand Saskia – but a key focus is on promoting sustainability and both aligning with and supporting the club's umbrella sustainability strategy called 'TSG is movement'.

Examples of this have ranged from recycling the stadium's two tons of grass cuttings per month into

paper (which, amongst other things, is used to print players' autograph cards), to the introduction of a reusable cup system in the PreZero Arena (which eliminates the waste of up to 500,000 plastic cups per season) and running a jersey contest promoting amateur club sustainability initiatives through fan videos.

The aim of PreZero's autumn 2019 #CleanGame initiative was to further drive eco awareness and reinforce spectator commitment to the environment through a re-forestation project that would deliver the club's (and the league's) first carbon neutral match.

Activation

Ahead of the November 1 home match against Paderborn, the sponsor and club launched a campaign called 'New Thinking For A #CleanGame'

which set out to ensure that every home fan attended the match with a 'climate ticket'.

The initiative kicked off in late October with a promotional campaign running across brand and club's social networks. It was led by a hero spot posted on their Facebook and Twitter pages that featured three of the club's star players and encouraged viewers to 'Like' the video.

For every 'Like', the sponsor promised to convert a regular match ticket into a so-called 'climate ticket' by planting one tree seedling per euro ticket price to ensure a carbon neutral match footprint. This was carried out by donating the funds to a reforestation project amongst small farmers in Uganda.

The activation also included a set of in-stadium strands that saw stadium ad spaces and perimeter billboards promoting the #CleanGame initiative, while

a team of kids also took to the pitch during half time to promote the project.

Three weeks after the match, on November 26, PreZero posted a wrap-up video on its YouTube channel and supporting social posts championing the success of the initiative.

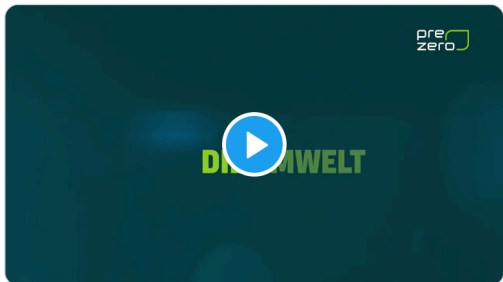
Outcome

The hero video and linked social content generated 22,000 views and 800 Likes across the brand and the club Facebook pages, as well as 1,100 views and 140 Likes on Twitter.

According to PreZero, the initiative generated sufficient engagement to give each of the stadium's 30,000 spectators' 'clean tickets' for the match.



TSG Hoffenheim @tsghoffenheim
! EURE LIKES FÜR DIE UMWELT ! ♻️
Pro „Like“ spendet @PreZeroTweets einem Stadionbesucher beim Spiel gegen den @SCPaderborn07 ein Upgrade zum Klima-Ticket und pflanzt so Bäume in Uganda. 🌳
#TSGSCP
#SauberesSpiel



4:01 PM · Oct 31, 2019

139 26 people are Tweeting about this

PreZero @PreZeroTweets
Ihr seid die Besten! 🙌 Jede Menge Upgrades zu Klima-Tickets durch eure „Likes“ beim Heimspiel der @tsghoffenheim Wir runden auf und spenden die restlichen Tickets. 💙
#TSGSCP#Nachhaltigkeit#SauberesSpiel



9:30 PM · Nov 1, 2019

12 See PreZero's other Tweets



Puma & AC Milan – 2020-21 Home Kit Launch

With Covid-19 still raging in July 2020, Puma & AC Milan used an Instagram-led campaign – celebrating Milan’s contemporary design culture and architecture – to launch the 2020-21 home kit.

The campaign creative reflected the design of the shirt itself and drove record sales figures through a multiphase launch spanning film, graphics, photo shoots, player and influencer support, pre-order and youth strands, personalisation offer and a media partnership giveaway.

Objectives

The campaign brief was to promote the new 2020/21 season kit – worn by AC Milan’s men’s, women’s and youth teams – through creative revolving around the shirt’s design inspiration –the city’s architecture in general and its famous Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II (a

four-story, double arcade in the centre of Milan that houses Italy’s oldest and smartest shopping mall) in particular.

The marketing team was tasked to roll out the campaign around the final game of the delayed 2019-20 season.

Activation

Leveraging spiking soccer interest around the final Serie A game of the season, the campaign began with a pre-order phase on July 25. Early purchases were incentivised with an offer of free name and number personalisation for those who ordered a jersey at the Casa Milan or AC Milan store in San Babila.

The socially0led teaser phase included graphics and a 10-second video posted on the club’s Facebook

and Instagram pages.

The new AC Milan 20/21 home kit officially went on sale on July 28 on PUMA.com, at PUMA stores, official AC Milan stores, store.milan.com and selected retailers around the world. It was unveiled at a socially distanced presentation event in Milan for the football and fashion media and then promoted across the club and the kit maker's social media platforms and backed by a PR push.

The initial tweets on AC Milan's and Puma's feed explained that the new shirt design was inspired by the 'grandeur of Milan and the magnificence of its Gallery'.

The debut tweet was followed up by graphic content and a six-post Puma Football Twitter thread explaining the background to the design.

This was followed later that day by the launch of the full hero social spot, illustrating how the jersey was inspired by the elegance and style of the city.

On July 29, a social contest launched to win a new shirt in harness with media partner @433.

And on July 30 a behind-the-scenes social spot of the players kit launch photo shoot was posted across club's channels.

A child/youth kit focused phase rolled out July 31. This was followed up by a small influencer social

strand which saw shirts delivered to and shared by a selection of other sports stars and celebrities including the NBA's Kevin Porter Jr.

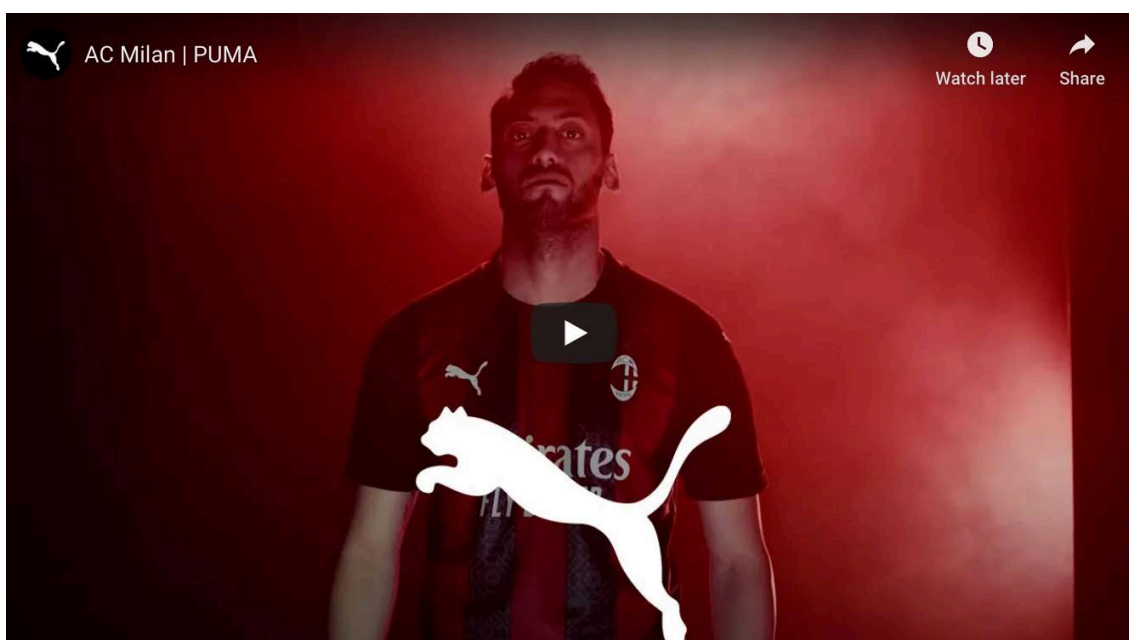
The kit then made its on-pitch debut on August 2 for the club's final home match of the season, against Cagliari, followed by an Instagram video thread on AC Milan's platform explaining the design process.

Outcome

Despite the challenge posed by Covid-19, the campaign drove a record sales boom for a new AC Milan shirt, with a 1,700-per-cent rise in purchases across the first 48 hours of the campaign compared to the previous season.

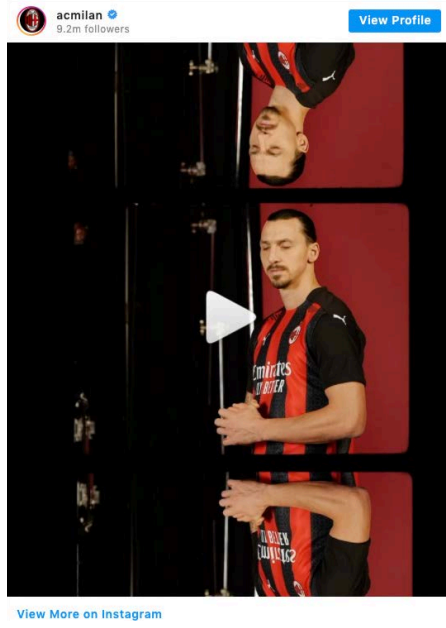
Indeed, the number of jerseys sold in the first two days exceeded the purchases made after the first three weeks of the previous year's new shirt.

The campaign's social media metrics also show success a month after the campaign's July 27 launch, with campaign content viewed more than six million times on the club and the sportswear brand's platforms (including 3.5 million views on AC Milan's Instagram feed and two million views on its Facebook page, plus a further 500,000 views on Puma's YouTube and Twitter channels).

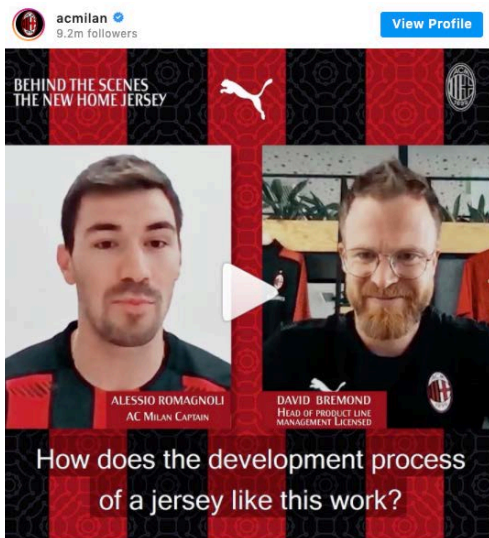




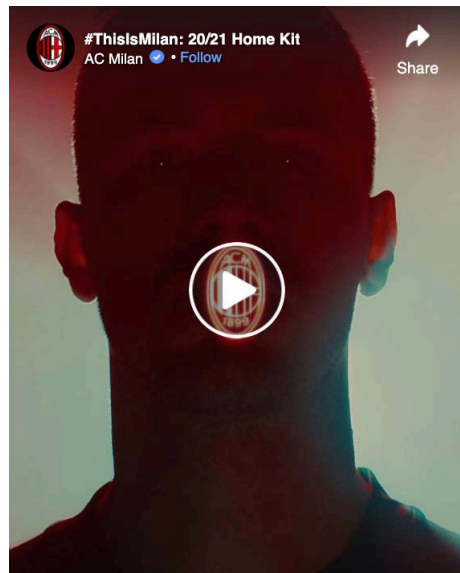
[View More on Instagram](#)



[View More on Instagram](#)



[View More on Instagram](#)



PUMA Football @pumafotball

One Galleria.
One Milan.
Sempre ●●

The 20/21 @acmilan Home Kit is here.

8:17 AM · Jul 28, 2020

4K 1.2K people are Tweeting about this

PUMA Football @pumafotball

Trust the Design, @acmilan edition.

The new Home Kit is out, but why this pattern?

Giving you answers in this thread 📌📌📌

1:43 PM · Jul 28, 2020

3.1K 578 people are Tweeting about this



Santander & Uefa – Santander Media House

Uefa partner Santander brought the excitement of the 2020 Champions League Final in Lisbon to the world through an enhanced edition of its 'Santander Media House' which focused on created content based around its football ambassadors available through the global media and via its on online platforms.

Objectives

In 2020, the second year of Santander's official sponsorship of the Uefa Champions League, the coronavirus pandemic forced its marketing team to activate primarily through creating and distributing compelling brand-exclusive match-related content for the international media and for its own digital platforms.

The aim was to bring the final closer to fans and achieve maximum visibility and impact for Santander.

Activation

In addition to its exclusive rights to the tournament's 'Player of the Week/Player of the Final' asset and the brand's international [hero television commercial starring legendary Brazilian striker Ronaldo](#), Santander's agency Arena Media came up with a solution to the brief in the form of an enhanced version of the 'Santander Media House'.

This saw the marketing team up with TBS for production services and with Movistar +, ESPN and Eleven Sports as broadcast platforms, while the DAZN agency managed the social channels [@footballsantander](#).

Ahead of the August 23 final between Bayern Munich and Paris Saint-Germain, a branded television set and mini pitch was built to host a programme of televised and virtual events around the final running

from Friday through Sunday.

The Media House programme began on the evening of September 21, with a livestreamed debate hosted by Santander Portugal chief executive Pedro Castro e Almeida and attended by Portuguese Professional Football League president Pedro Proença. The theme was ‘Sustainability. What does the future hold for the sport after the pandemic? The emotion of the Champions League’ and the debate saw presenters and guests share their views on the challenges football is facing because of Covid-19 and the future of the game.

The following day, the Santander Media House hosted an event for members of the international media to connect remotely and listen to what famous former players talk about the upcoming match. It included one-to-one interviews with player ambassadors, a press conference and a series of special television programmes broadcast worldwide in Spanish and Portuguese.

The brand’s principle ambassadors for its Champions League sponsorship – Brazilian legends Ronaldo and Cafu – participated remotely.

The two stars also hosted a live programme prior to the final which was broadcast simultaneously in Argentina, Mexico and Spain with Movistar and ESPN and in Portugal with Eleven Sports.

This was followed by several hours of one-to-one press conferences and interview opportunities with other iconic footballers from the brand’s endorser stable including Deco, Figo, Gaizka Mendieta and Rui Costa (who all attended the event in person).

Content from brand ambassadors (The F2Freestylers in the United Kingdom and Ronaldo in Brazil) was posted on social media – including Facebook, Instagram Stories and Twitter – across Football Santander channels and the player’s own platforms.

Outcome

The Media House was attended by more than 100 media organisations from 40 different countries.

According to Banco de Santander, the media partner activation strand impacted on more than 42 million people around the world, while on social platforms the activation engaged more than 100 million with more than four million interactions on Santander Media House content.

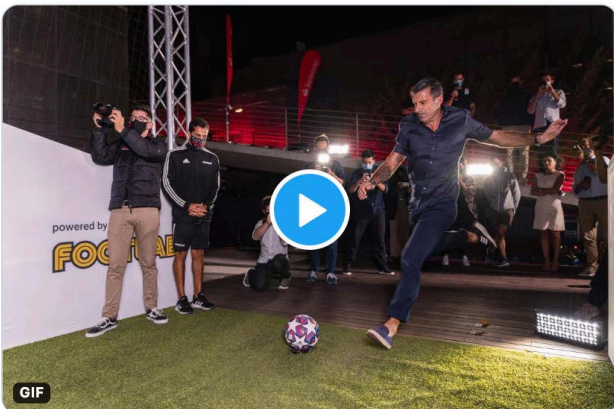
Overall, the programme further increased the brand’s association with the competition such that, according to Santander’s Nielsen tracking, it is now considered the third brand most associated with the Champions League, behind only long-time tournament partners Mastercard and Heineken.



You never lose it 🌟

@luisfigo conjured up some magic at the Santander Media House 🎩

Who will make a magical moment tonight? #UCLFinal



10:42 AM · Aug 23, 2020



59 See Football Santander's other Tweets



Great to see my friends Deco and Rui Costa at the @footballsantander event today! Looking forward for tomorrow's @championsleague final! #santandermediahouse #bancosantander #championsleaguefinal 🏆🇵🇹🇵🇹🇵🇹



10:11 PM · Aug 22, 2020



595 82 people are Tweeting about this



PlayStation Studios & Uefa – PlayStation FC Final

Targeting young football fans, Sony Playstation tied the Champions League to football gaming via a campaign that culminated with 'The PlayStation FC Final', a match in the same stadium as the 2019-20 final one day later.

Objectives

After 21 years as a sponsor of the Uefa Champions League, Sony PlayStation agreed a new exclusive asset in the 2019-2021 cycle – the rights to the 'Matchday+1' activation (meaning the entire stadium was available to the brand for the whole day after the final).

With this new asset, parent company Sony Interactive Entertainment sought to engage the segment of younger fans who increasingly consume football via non-traditional channels.

The 2018-19 activation emerged after research showed how this segment was 'living out footballing fantasies on PlayStation', but that there was no clearly related brand link to the real tournament.

So PlayStation challenged its agency to marry its UCL sponsorship with its PlayStation FC sub-brand to give gamer fans 'a chance to live out their ultimate fantasy and follow in the footsteps of their footballing heroes' in the hours immediately after the biggest club football match of the year.

The aims were to:

- Drive awareness of PlayStation's Champions League sponsorship
- Connect with the new generation of gaming-obsessed football fans across the brand's key 10 markets
- Build on the PlayStation FC brand to create an

- experience beyond the actual final
- Create a platform which appealed to younger fans who consume football through non-traditional channels
- Bring the brand's 'for the players' mission to life through the Uefa partnership

Activation

Ear to the Ground's solution was to make the 'PlayStation FC Final' the biggest global creator match ever, on the day immediately after the 2019 Champions League final in Madrid.

The idea was to turn fantasy into reality for the gamers, and all campaign activity and content was created in collaboration with global publishers from 10 local regions (Benelux, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, LATAM, the Nordics, Portugal, Spain, the UK and the USA) so creators could interpret the initiative in a way that was relevant to them and their territory and local audience.

Team/Player Announcements

The initiative kicked off during the Champions League knockout stages, when two teams were created: 'The PlayStation FC All-Stars' and 'The PlayStation FC Ultimate 11'.

Each team had a 'creator captain' (freestyle World Champion Lisa Zimouche and YouTuber DjMaRiio), a manager (Andrea Pirlo and Yaya Touré) and a player icon (UCL winners Fernando Morientes & Luis Garcia).

Players and fans were then drafted into the two sides through creator content, competitions and team challenges, and announcements were made through bespoke professional player content (such as Juan Cuadrado and Kyle Walker revealing the identity of key players on their personal channels).

Further player announcements were made by sending out physical PlayStation kit boxes, whose unboxing – shared online – would further drive further awareness and engagement.

Kit Launch

The PlayStation and agency teams further blurred the physical football and gaming football realities by worked with concept kit designers on bespoke kits for the two teams.

Setpace and Xztals created kits for the teams and [released them in the Fifa 2020 game](#).

UCL Festival training

On the day of the 2018-19 final in Madrid, the teams, managers and creator captains hosted a warmup session that took the form of a series of physical challenges on the Plaza Mayor UCL Festival pitch in front of fans. The best performances won the team a chance to add more pro players to their squad.

The teams attended the final itself as hospitality guests and shared social content from the final to their followers.

The PlayStation FC Final

The day after Liverpool lifted the real trophy, the two teams walked out onto the pitch at the Estadio Metropolitano in Madrid for the PlayStation FC Final.

All involved – creators, players, legends and fans – experienced as many professional footballer touchpoint experiences as possible, from pre-match rituals to tunnel walkouts, while EA eSports commentators Brandon Smith and Richard Buckley reported live on the game's PlayStation YouTube channel live-stream.

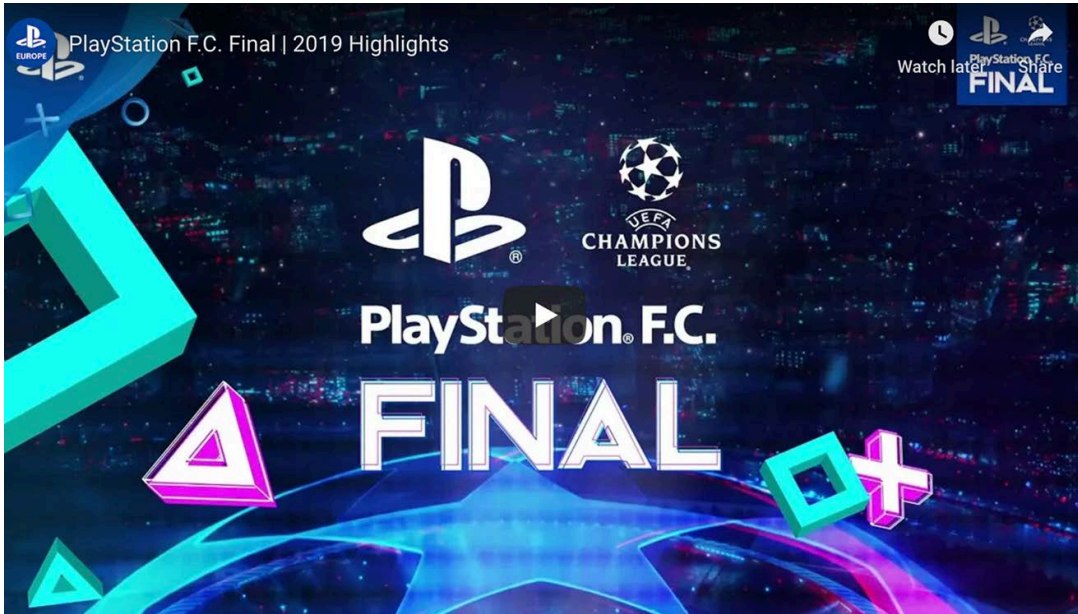
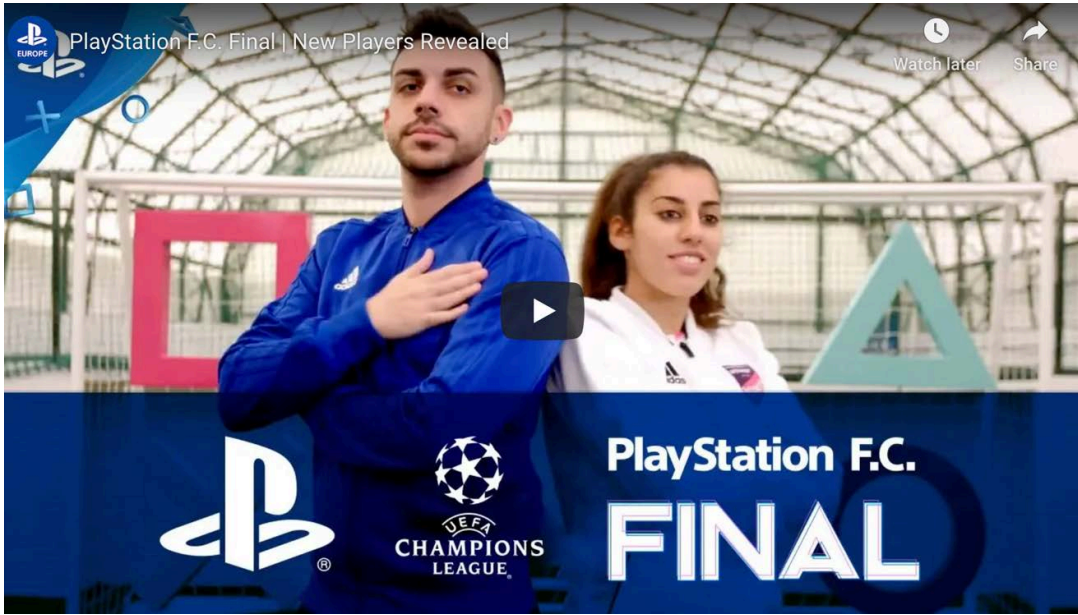
Outcome

In relation to the lead objective, the campaign drove record levels of awareness of PlayStation's UCL sponsorship, with a six-per-cent year-on-year rise in sponsorship awareness amongst the target audience of 13- to 24-year-old fans.

The initiative saw participants across 16 countries and reached 90 million fans globally – making it, according to the agency, among the biggest creator campaigns ever. Video Interface Kit (VIK) deals were agreed with 24 football and gaming creators, which created a football platform that generated 550,000 organic views with an average view time of seven minutes in just the first 24 hours after the project launch.

In terms of key KPIs, the campaign generated:

- 84m total views
- 6.7m engagements
- 175m impressions
- A CPM of £3.77
- ROI in media value of £6.76 for every £1 spent (v standard YouTube rates)





Verizon & NFL – 5G Stadium Experience

At 2020's Super Bowl LIV in Miami, NFL telecoms partner Verizon showcased the capability of 5G with an immersive experience.

Objectives

Verizon is working with the NFL to enable new fan experiences led by enhanced 5G in-stadium connectivity in 13 stadiums throughout the league, with a focus on four areas: enabling the streamlining of operations through smarter systems, providing higher bandwidth to drive more seamless and faster digital interactions, ensuring enhanced connectivity to support more fluid fan experiences and unlocking new enterprise engagement opportunities.

The brand spent \$80m to build out 5G in Miami's Hard Rock Stadium for the Super Bowl, but only the very few fans lucky enough to have tickets and 5G

handsets saw the impact.

So Verizon used its rights around the Super Bowl to offer fans the chance to experience Verizon 5G Ultrawide Band future in the controlled Big Game Live fan zone at Miami's Bayfront Park.

Activation

Verizon teamed up with agency Momentum to build the branded experience in the fan zone during the first week of February 2020.

'The Verizon 5G Stadium' was an VR curved theatre immersive experience which offered a five-minute long experience that transported fans onto the field for the final two minutes of an epic game and gave them 5G phones to interact with the action on the field.

5G features showcased how NFL fans in the future

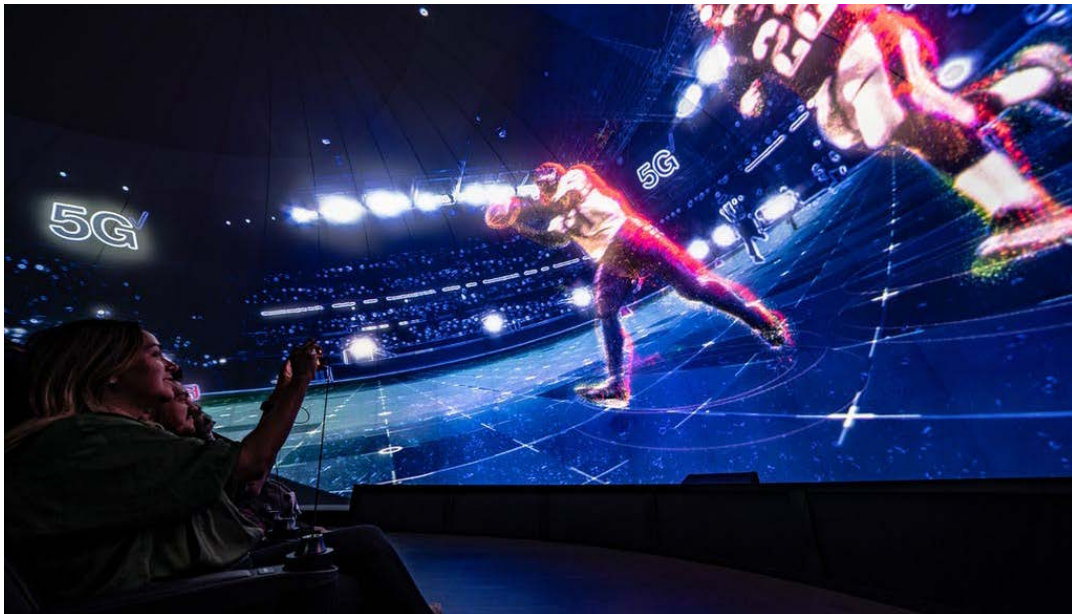
would have the ability to:

- Explore the entire stadium through an augmented reality 'way finder'
- Track their favourite player with real-time augmented reality statistics
- Choose from multiple 4K camera streams making 'every seat the best seat in the house'
- Control 'volumetric replays', watching any play from the game from any angle at any speed.
- A media partnership with ESPN for a 'live look in' allowed a taste of the 5G Stadium to be broadcast to millions of viewers.

Outcome

The 5G experience generated 2.1bn media impressions, 145,000 individual engagements, 10,245 in person attendees and reached 7.97m ESPN viewers through the media partnership.

Among those who interacted with the experience, it drove a 30 per cent rise in 'likelihood to recommend Verizon'.





Woodford Reserve & Churchill Downs Incorporated – My Old Kentucky Home

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.

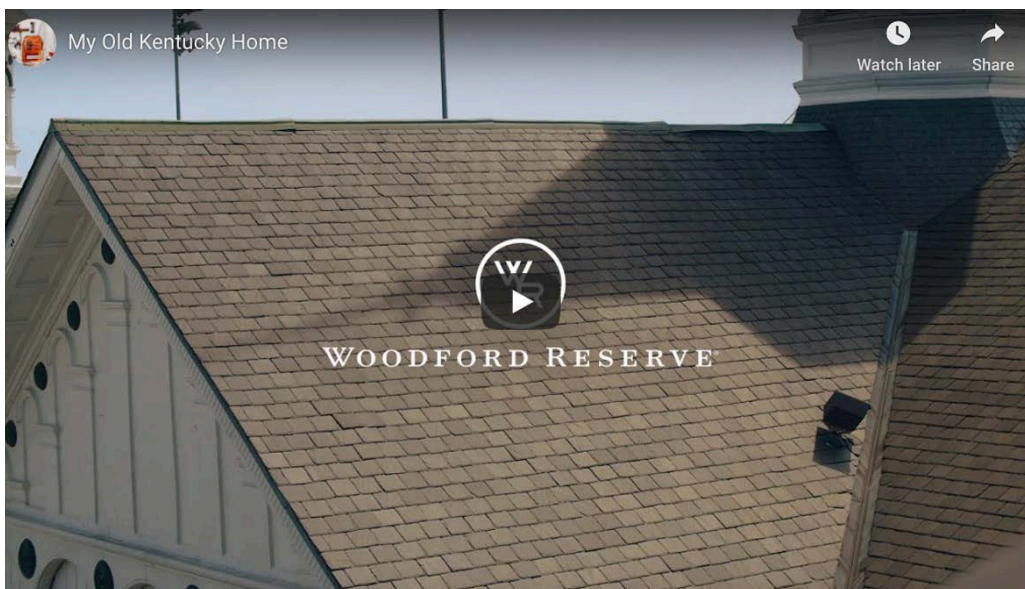
As usual, the brand had created a limited edition 2020 race bottle and packaging, launched back in March.

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.



Would you like to have your own sponsorship activation featured in a future casebook?



Submit an activation you have worked on and have it featured in one of our Casebooks!

If you work at a Brand, Agency or Rights-Holder and have worked on a successful, innovative, or unique sponsorship activation campaign then we would love to hear from you.

We cover global sport sponsorship activations, so whether your activation was in Europe, Asia, the Americas, or worldwide, we want to know more about the campaign you worked on and why it was a success!

Previously featured



For more information and to submit an activation, get in touch with Richard, our Head of Sponsorship, at: Richard.Welbirg@sportbusiness.com