

Halftime in America

Chrysler convinces NBC to convert over 175 local ad breaks into a single two-minute national break during the Super Bowl XLVI. (Video)

Insight

In February 2011, The Chrysler 200 drove head-on into the Super Bowl with the iconic "Imported from Detroit" TV spot featuring Eminem and changed America's view of the city of Detroit and its automotive heritage for the better. By 2012, the US auto industry had turned a vital corner and was showing progress. To spread the good news and continue the forward momentum, Chrysler vowed to return to the Super Bowl once again to keep Detroit's story at the forefront of its national discourse in a powerful way.



The approach year-over-year didn't change: Content, Context, and Connection. It needed the right rallying cry (content), the perfect place to put it (context), resulting in the most powerful encounter with audiences possible (connection) in and around the Super Bowl event.

Strategy

The Lean-In Moment Sets the Context

From a content perspective, Chrysler (and its partners at Wieden + Kennedy) hit it out of the ballpark once again with a truly inspiring piece of content - a dramatic salvo featuring an icon of American grit, Clint Eastwood. It was way more than "an ad"; it was the ultimate pep talk - a pep talk urging Americans to come together and rally to win. It was two minutes long, and worth every second.

UM didn't have a 2-minute spot secured, however. Negotiations for Super Bowl inventory are done way in advance and it only had two 90-second units in the 2nd and 3rd quarters. It was now January, only weeks before game day, and the odds were against UM.

But the agency believed in the power of a moment - its moment. It knew that the only way to deliver the message correctly was to emulate how a great coach would deliver a pep talk to their team in the locker room - just before the 2nd half begins as the teams prepare to enter the field to fight until the finish.

This "lean-in" moment became critical to the strategy if it was to do right by the second C, context, it needed its own halftime show.

UM may have been the underdogs but had a will to win!

Execution

If the Shoe Doesn't Fit, Reconfigure the Shoe!

The agency had its work cut out! Drop the original two spots and somehow get the content into the exact spot it wanted it? Not just a snap of the fingers...

Now, reformatting is generally something standard in the TV buying world. But this is the Super Bowl. It is the most expensive and most exclusive media buy of the year.



The agency worked tirelessly with the NBC Sports Group to reformat halftime in order to air the spot as close to the start of the second half as possible. To pull it off, it convinced NBC to convert over 175 local ad breaks into a single 2:00 minute national break.

Yes, UM reconfigured halftime of THE SUPER BOWL for Chrysler. Not bad.

The end result was magic. Just as the teams were about to emerge for the second half, Clint Eastwood emerged in America's living room with an entire country on the edge of their seats. He delivered a 2:00 minute, chills-down-your-spine speech urging Americans to come together and rally to win the second half of the recession.

To harness the energy of the moment and to deliver on the third C, Chrysler's social presence was perfectly positioned to receive and amplify consumers' response. It was the ultimate marriage of the message, the media, and the moment.

Results

The Proof is in the Pudding



SUPER BOWL XLVI on NBC averaged 111.3 million viewers to become the most-watched programme in the history of American television (at the time). The coordinated online and offline efforts made this powerful ad stand apart from the rest of the day's offerings.

Increased positive brand impression by 35%* (seven times the goal) and increased quality perception by 24%* (nearly five times the goal).

The ad generated huge buzz: by the end of the day nearly 3.5 million people were following Chrysler on Twitter. After the game Chrysler was 2nd place on the YouTube Ad Blitz. By the end of the week it had nearly 18 million views on YouTube.

Translated buzz into consideration by growing Chrysler.com site traffic by 46%.

More impressively, Chrysler stimulated a powerful conversation that unfolded over the following days, weeks, and months. Eastwood's halftime pep talk waded into political debate, and the moment-in-time earned a tremendous amount of coverage in the national press.

In the end, Chrysler delivered across the three Cs and left its indelible mark on Super Bowl advertising history.

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