

Westin Hotels & Resorts

Problem

How does a premium hotel chain market itself to the busy business traveler?

Solution

Use OOH formats to reach its audience in commuter and travel hubs.

Background

While Westin is a global brand with 152 hotels and resorts around the world, it has a significantly smaller footprint compared to its key competitors – Hilton, Marriott, and Hyatt. To make things more difficult, Westin has been historically outspent by as much as 3-to-1 by its main competitors.

Objective

Westin needed a strategy that would outsmart the category leadership and communicate Westin's unique hotel experience to the upscale business traveler. The goals of the campaign would be to help the brand maintain a premium position, while increasing brand awareness and other key brand health measures.

Strategy

Preliminary research indicated Westin consumers are driven to succeed in both their professional and personal lives, seeking to create and maintain a "balanced life". As heavy business travelers, this balance is disrupted by the chaotic and de-humanizing travel experience. Westin's strategy was to be an oasis of calm in a sea of chaos – placing its calming renewal message in high-stress environments.

Plan Details

Westin transformed the country's most chaotic transportation hubs (and the company's top 5 feeder markets) into places of renewal to demonstrate how Westin hotels can transform travelers' hectic lives into a rejuvenating experience. Using unconventional OOH units, the company transformed the mundane commute into an unexpected oasis.

The OOH campaign employed over 270 different executions and 2,754 media placements. Bulletins along major commuter routes allowed for 3D executions of Westin's calming message. Airport dominations across five key markets helped travelers relax in the rushed airport environment. Subway station dominations, sub-media, and lenticulars were used in train and subway stations to blanket the chaotic space with serene nature and vacation images. Some unique executions included full-train wraps in Grand Central stations and a live zen garden in the center of San Francisco's business district.



Results

In 2007, Westin increased revenue per available room by +9%, while maintaining its premium positioning. The company achieved its highest average daily rate in brand history (\$189/night), an increase of 7% vs. YAG. A post-campaign study also showed significant lifts among consumers who were aware of the advertising in top-of-mind awareness (+15%), intent to stay during next business trip (+4%), 1st or 2nd Brand Preference (+8%), and overall hotel rating (+11%). The research also showed increases in core brand health metrics in key markets: “a relaxing place to stay” (+9%), “a renewing place” (+8%), and “a place where guests can reach their full potential” (+8%).