Problem
How does a telecommunications company stay relevant at a major sporting event?

Solution
Use OOH formats to blanket the market and incorporate interactive elements to maximize engagement.

Background
The 2013 NCAA Men’s Final Four basketball tournament was held in Atlanta at the Georgia Dome. AT&T, a corporate champion sponsor, wanted to blanket the Dome and surrounding area with various messages to connect with attendees and fans of the tournament right in their own backyard. There was also a desire to get in to the “clean zone” where only sponsors of the NCAA had access. Several short-term permits were awarded for large wallscapes in the clean zone, but due to the fine print in the permits, no commercial messaging was allowed. As a result, a last-minute budget was allocated to the wallscapes. Roughly two weeks prior to the event, the planning team needed to look for replacement/alternative media options in a nearly sold out market and work on logistics for installing and executing an interactive wall for the event weekend.

Objective
The media planning agency was tasked with recommending placements to increase awareness of AT&T as a sponsor and supporter of the NCAA, as well as tout the speed and quality of the network. The target objective was to connect with attendees of the tournament and fans watching games at venues around town.

Strategy
The planning team considered all available OOH media options throughout Atlanta: static and digital traditional OOH, non-traditional/place-based, transit/commuter rail and airport. The team also investigated competitive and other sponsor OOH activity.

Looking at the area surrounding the Georgia Dome, the team considered how to reach people coming into town to attend the tournament as well as people in Atlanta and where they could go to watch the games. Signage at Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport could reach fans and players flying into Atlanta. MARTA commuter rail trains and stations were a great way to reach primarily locals. Static and digital bulletins reached general market and fans with 70+ placements on all major arteries and roadways throughout Atlanta, as well as some specifically targeted to the area around the Dome.

Initially the team recommended 143 weekly GRPs for measured bulletins/walls, knowing it was a VERY strong program and would definitely create a buzz and awareness in the marketplace. To compare, when using OOH as a launch vehicle, the team usually plans at a benchmark of 75-100 weekly GRPs. The final plan ended up being 295 weekly GRPs for measured media + #50 showings of transit and five station dominations/saturations.
Plan Details

Market: Atlanta

Flight Dates: March 18 – April 14, 2013, a four-week period surrounding the Final Four event weekend (games were held April 6 and 8).

OOH Formats Used: Bulletins (static and digital), transit station dominations, platform 2-sheets, transit digital displays, interior car cards, airport dominations (dioramas, wall spectacles, digital signage, full baggage carousel wraps)

An interactive wall was set up at the NCAA Big Dance Concert Series in Atlanta, in conjunction with the 2013 NCAA Men’s Final Four. The concert series was held at Centennial Olympic Park on April 5-7. The interactive wall had two interactive opportunities. First was a Live Tourney Tracker that used real time stats and projected outcomes of the chosen teams. The second option was to learn the famous victory dances from a few key players. Both options could be shared on social media to further the reach of the AT&T message.

AT&T even hosted an AT&T Block Party featuring the Zac Brown Band. The campaign rotated copy announcing the free Zac Brown concert on key digital elements leading up to the event.

Across all contracted media, the campaign ran 30+ creative messages to keep AT&T’s brand, network and sponsorship top of mind and fresh over the course of the NCAA Final Four weekend.

Results

The interactive wall was extremely successful. Key stats for the live dates of Tourney Tracker (April 5-7):

- 1,800+ touch interactions throughout the tournament
- 425 GIFs emailed to users
- 550+ Dance Step selections
- Completion rate over 75%

Strategic OOH placements and sheer volume of locations achieved the desired goal of blanketing Atlanta and making sure the AT&T brand, network quality and NCAA sponsorship involvement messaging were seen all over the city leading up to and during the tournament weekend. AT&T was everywhere and their involvement was pivotal in the NCAA Final Four tournament success in the city of Atlanta.