Problem
How does a television network drive tune-in for a new show?

Solution
Use high-profile OOH units to make a splash in the market and supplement with a mix of formats to make the brand resonate.

Background
On the heels of the *Longmire* premiere in 2012, A&E’s most watched scripted debut ever, the network continued to strive to be a destination for premium scripted content in competition with other top cable networks like AMC, FX, HBO, and Showtime. In 2013, A&E bolstered its catalogue of original scripted series and broadened its drama block with the premiere of *Bates Motel*, a contemporary prequel to the Alfred Hitchcock film *Psycho*. The premiere episode aired on March 18, 2013.

The series detailed the dark backstory of Norman Bates and his relationship with his mother Norma. Set in the present day, the two have moved to a seaside town to start over and have bought a motel. The series weaves a rich, layered and entirely new narrative around Norman Bates’ teen years as he develops into the infamous killer brought to life in Hitchcock’s celebrated film.

The most high-profile production to have come to A&E to date, *Bates Motel* was the network’s top priority in 2013 for marketing and for the brand as a whole. The challenge of the campaign was to generate a must-see level of excitement surrounding the drama series, showing consumers that *Bates Motel* would serve in homage to the original horror film without “watering down” the masterpiece.

Objective
In order to drive awareness and garner industry attention and audience excitement, the media planning agency was tasked with devising an OOH campaign that would seed early awareness with a longer campaign narrative, tease the audience with gripping creative in major markets, and drive tune-in to the premiere event. The goal was to make *Bates Motel* A&E’s most successful drama launch to date within the target demographic.

For OOH specifically, the goal was to help build a national television rating for a still growing A&E category (scripted drama series) by driving tune-in in the two biggest Nielsen markets: New York and Los Angeles. These are also the two most important markets for reaching the entertainment and ad sales community. In addition to driving a national rating, another main goal of the campaign was to bring a new, younger audience to the network.

Strategy
The planning team launched an OOH campaign to seed awareness as early as December 2012 and maintain messaging through the shows premiere on March 18, 2013. There were three distinct creative phases that showcased various elements of the show’s tonality. The first phase for early awareness brought to life the iconic BATES MOTEL sign from the original motion picture, while the second creative phase depicted shocking and graphic images to pique interest amongst the consumer base. The third phase pictured Norman and Norma Bates sitting on a motel bed – maybe a little too close for comfort – to bring out the show’s
theme of voyeurism and build anticipation leading into the premiere.

The campaign launched mid-December 2012 with a national cinema program, reaching an engaged and affluent audience of first-adopters in indie and art-house theaters across the country. This ran in conjunction with traditional formats in New York and Los Angeles, including a widespread Manhattan phone kiosk campaign targeting not only to the general population but skewed specifically toward media agencies. A high-impact unit in Times Square was also included in order to take advantage of the massive audiences in the area around New Year’s Eve.

These formats continued through the second creative phase in order to maintain consumer dialogue, along with a long form “behind the scenes” content piece that ran in movie theaters nationwide. In mid-February, additional media was layered onto the existing campaigns in New York and Los Angeles in order to bulk up OOH presence and increase consumer awareness in the final weeks leading to the show’s premiere. Again, these formats were selected to reach a general audience but also targeted to areas reaching entertainment and advertising companies.

The jewel of the final phase was a true-to-life replica of the original BATES MOTEL sign reconstructed on a bulletin in SoHo. Using 3D working neon lights installed on the face of the board and a 2D extension to replicate the shape of the BATES MOTEL sign, the bulletin lit up the streets of SoHo and garnered local press.

In addition, private events were held for over 1,000 attendees at indie and art-house theaters the week prior to the premiere, offering a pre-screening of the pilot episode of Bates Motel. Included in this portion of the program were mentions and events pages on individual theater Facebook pages, amplifying the existing OOH media presence.

Plan Details
Markets: Los Angeles, New York
Flight Dates and OOH Formats Used:
Across all three phases:
• New York: 201 vertical phone kiosks with an agency-focused skew, high-impact SoHo bulletin on Houston Street @ Crosby St.
• Los Angeles: high-impact bulletin at Sunset & Crescent Heights

Phase 1, mid-December 2012 – mid-January 2013:
• National: onscreen cinema :30 spots with Spotlight Cinema
• New York: high-impact Times Square spectacular at 47th & Broadway

Phase 2, mid-January – mid-February 2013:
• National: onscreen cinema 2:30 “behind the scenes” content piece

Phase 3, mid-February – mid-March 2013 through March 18 premiere date:
• New York: 6 newsstand locations, 150 king-size bus posters with headliner displays
• Los Angeles: 122 transit shelters within the entertainment industry footprint, wallscape at Sunset & Hammond
• Austin: video spots and banners on the welcome screens at area hotels (March 5-18 flight to target during SXSW); ads played on TVs in nearly 6,000 rooms
• Baltimore, Denver, Houston, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, St. Louis: Landmark Theaters screening events: early private screenings of the Bates Motel pilot episode on March 16. Promotion included banner...
inclusion on e-newsletters and website, custom invitations to fan club members, and event inclusion on Landmark Theater main Facebook page as well as individual theater Facebook pages.

- National: onscreen cinema :30 spot, branded medium drink cups & popcorn bags at theater concessions, onscreen cinema 2:30 “behind the scenes” content piece

Overall the campaign delivered 327 million impressions for adults 18+ amongst TAB-rated formats and units. Although much of the focus was to create general mass awareness and reach industry influencers, 166 million impressions (51%) were delivered against the desired adults 25-49 audience. The campaign delivered an additional 115 million impressions among non-TAB-rated formats (cinema, digital place-based and transit).

Results

*Bates Motel* garnered 1.599 million viewers in the adults 18-49 demographic and 1.633 million in adults 25-54. Those numbers made the series the most-watched original drama within those key targeted demos in the network’s history – and placed *Bates Motel* as the #2 new cable drama of the season.

The neon sign execution in New York garnered local buzz (http://www.boweryboogie.com/2013/02/bates-motel-neons-light-up-houston-street-2/) and was given Second Place honors in the first annual Innovation on Display Gallery at the 2013 TAB/OAAA Conference, as voted on by conference attendees.

Lori Peterzell, Vice President of Brand Strategy and Consumer Marketing at A&E stated, “The OOH portion of our marketing campaign for *Bates Motel* was integral in realizing our objectives for this program. The media planning team worked closely with our marketing team to ensure that our OOH presence was bold and splashy and made a statement. We feel that the neon sign execution in New York demonstrated real marketing prowess and we were thrilled at the industry buzz it received from the moment posting completed. Together we took the iconic motel sign and built it out on a high-impact scale to prove that a creative approach can turn the traditional OOH space into a physical event in and of itself.”