

MINI Cooper Countryman

Background

Since entering the US market in 2007, MINI Cooper has maintained their reputation for being a cutting edge automotive group by providing consumers with reliable and attractive vehicles. In January 2011 MINI Cooper decided to reveal their all-new MINI Countryman, MINI's version of a crossover.

For the first time since their entrance into the US market, MINI Cooper was now offering a different model of car that was unlike anything they have ever produced before. Like any carmaker, they were wary of how consumers would react to the new model. It was very different than what MINI lovers were used to and prized.

MINI was known for their small and sleek designs. In the US market where crossover vehicles are a dime a dozen, MINI Cooper broke ground by offering a smaller and gas-efficient vehicle that was not only sexy but held its own on the highways. They had decided to set foot on uncommon ground and enter the realm of the crossovers.

It would take a lot of hard work and precise planning to make sure the MINI Countryman was welcomed as warmly as the MINI Cooper was. But in order to do so, MINI would need to answer the following questions:

- How could MINI generate a large awareness of the Countryman using unique and traditional/non-traditional formats while maintaining the support and trust of MINI lovers?
- How could MINI prove the Countryman is still a MINI Cooper at the core with the added capabilities of a crossover?

Objective

The main objective and focus was to create awareness and generate buzz of the all-new MINI Countryman by utilizing a combination of traditional media forms with a non-traditional and unique twist.

The long-term goal was to inform consumers of the new vehicle and to position MINI as a player in the crossover vehicle category. When one thinks of MINI Cooper, you think of a small and zippy car. This would not be the case with the Countryman. Instead, MINI wanted to brand themselves as a fixture in a different class of car that is new to both them and MINI lovers.

MINI placed focus on adults 18–34 who are hip and trendy, cultured stylists and inspired by performance. The Countryman still catered to the same mindset MINI Cooper was known for, but wanted to expand that focus to include a new wave of MINI lovers.

Strategy

The cohesion and integration of amazing creative and perfect placement made for a very unique experience.

From a creative standpoint, the concept was to pop out and grab a hold of the consumer. Because this was for a launch and new ground for MINI, the creative needed to address and acknowledge all of the attributes of the new vehicle, i.e. all-wheel drive, larger size, more power, etc. The creative would ultimately introduce the consumer to the new vehicle and welcome them



into a new realm and leave them awe-inspired.

With that said, three options were selected to help capture the essence of the 3D creative: high impact spectaculars, 3D cinema spots and drive teams. The three options would allow MINI to cover as much ground as possible while still maintaining the “wow” factor that MINI is known for. The high impact spectaculars would be the “wow” factor - it would help generate the buzz about the new vehicle. The drive teams would help introduce the new vehicle in a very personal way. They would allow consumers to be up close and touch/look/see the vehicle without having to set foot into a showroom. The 3D spots would allow for those markets not blessed with street teams or high impact units to get a sneak peek at the new vehicle. The 3D movie age was making a big splash in box offices in early 2011 and MINI integrated the cutting edge technology to help promote the all new Countryman.

Plan Details

Markets: Atlanta, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco

Flighting Dates: January - April 2011

Out of Home Formats Used: high impact spectaculars, 3D cinema spots, drive teams

Budget: \$100,000 and over

Overall, the out of home media ran between mid-January 2011 to mid-April 2011. As mentioned, the plan consisted of three major elements: high impact spectaculars, 3D cinema spots and drive teams in a total of five markets. The Drive Teams were an integral part of the campaign. They consisted of a street legal production of a Classic MINI Cooper sitting atop of an all-new Countryman. The concept was to show how much storage the Countryman has and how MINI has evolved over the years. The teams were situated in high traffic areas in the five markets and engaged consumers as they walked by, allowing them to look and sit inside of the vehicle. They also paid visits to major sights like stadiums, office headquarters, public squares and even TV networks. The Drive Teams also made an appearance on NBC's *The Today Show* and created a lot of fantastic buzz that got national airtime on a premiere TV network.

Specific flying dates for each formats:

- New York Times Square spectacular: February 7 – April 3
- Chicago spectacular: January 17 – April 10
- New York Drive Team: January 10–16
- Los Angeles Drive Team: January 10–16
- San Francisco Drive Team: January 17–23
- Atlanta Drive Team: January 17–23
- Chicago Drive Team: January 31 – February 6
- 3D Cinema ½ National Program in 844 theaters: January 21 – March 10

The campaign budget was over \$1 million.



Results

The MINI Cooper Countryman Launch was a huge success. The high impact spectaculars in both Times Square and Chicago created a lot of buzz. With the added support of the drive teams and cinema spots, the campaign was considered to be one of the most memorable and resonating campaigns seen thus far. The high impact spectaculars helped capture the audience's of two huge markets while the hands-on experience from our drive teams and 3D cinema allowed us to infiltrate the remaining markets. The conjunction of unique ideas like 3D cinema spots, amazing creative execution like our drive teams concept, along with excellent placement made for an unforgettable MINI Cooper campaign.

The campaign was picked up by many news outlets and blogging communities from many automotive, advertising and social networking sites. In addition to coverage on “The Today's Show”, there are also countless numbers of videos on YouTube.com from passersby posting their own experience of seeing the extravagant billboards in person.

As a testament to the campaign success, MINI Cooper has expressed interest in executing similar campaigns for future vehicle launches.