

Dexter

Problem

How does a network build excitement for a show's final season?

Solution

Connect OOH formats with social and mobile to give fans a way to be a part of the conversation.

Background

Showtime, gearing up to launch the premiere of its tenth and final season of *Dexter* in June of 2013, wanted to thank its core audience – referred to as “Dexciples” – by giving them an opportunity to interact with *Dexter* like never before.

Given the mature-natured content of the show, the planning team needed to devise a way to connect with this ardent following while ensuring that the messages would be amenable in the public domain. To add to the challenge, the budget was limited and there was a small window for execution.

Objective

The objectives were twofold: to develop a unique program to thank loyal *Dexter* fans for their allegiance to the series over the past 9 seasons. Second, create a cross-platform campaign that integrated mobile, social, and OOH media formats.

Strategy

The digital agency's solution was to create a campaign with user-generated content to not only promote the final season of *Dexter*, but also empower fans to become a part of a virtual *Dexter* screenplay. The campaign would start online, leverage social and mobile formats, and ultimately extend to OOH.

To enlist the help of its viewers, Showtime used Twitter to encourage fans to download a photo-driven augmented reality mobile application that would allow people to use photos to connect to the virtual world of *Dexter*. The fan-generated content would be showcased on a large-format digital spectacular in the heart of Times Square.

Upon download of the app, fans who confirmed that they were 18 or older could upload a photo and select virtual content such as the notorious blood-stained apron, a slash wound or a gray henley shirt—all recurring iconic symbols throughout the series. The *Dexter* overlays were then superimposed on their real-world picture. The new image was then “watermarked” with text reading “I Love #Dexter! The End Begins Sunday, June 30 at 9ET/PT only on #Showtime @SHO_Dexter.” The themed user photos were uploaded to the app live feed and could be shared through Facebook and Twitter. The age-gate protocol also checked for inappropriate content beyond each social media's respective platform censors.

For two weeks leading up to the premiere, *Dexter*-themed images were collected by Showtime. During the final week of the campaign, the images were displayed on a prominent digital screen in Times Square, amplifying exposure, ramping up excitement, and driving tune-in for the premiere.



Pairing the visual, impactful nature of OOH with that of the interactive, user-generated app platform, the campaign heightened the consumer experience and allowed Showtime's message to move seamlessly across screens and live beyond a consumer's mobile device.

Plan Details

Market: New York

Flight Dates: June 24-30, 2013. Copy ran for 8 minutes each hour.

OOH Formats Used: Digital spectacular in Times Square; the app ran from June 6-20 on a custom Showtime channel

Results

Over a two-week period, there were over 400 engagements with the app. More than 100 unique engagements (25% of total) were shared via social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and email.

