Marriott International

Problem
How does a premium hotel chain raise awareness of its brand to the busy business traveler?

Solution
Use OOH to create an environment showcasing the style and comfort found at the hotels.

Background
These days travel is more stressful, uncomfortable, and exhausting than ever before. The role of the hotel catering to business class guests is to provide relief from the stress of traveling, but it has become difficult for brands to differentiate themselves and offer travelers more than they expect.

Inspired by the client’s “Style and space. Beautifully priced” platform, which asks “what if everywhere you went, you experienced so much more than you expected?”, the planning team sought to evoke the emotional uplift experienced by guests at SpringHill Suites when they first see the hotel’s stylish design and spaciousness.

The campaign brought these features to the most unexpected place – the typically uncomfortable security checkpoint - would make the most impact during the travel journey.

Objective
The objective was to increase brand awareness of SpringHill Suites’ inspiring design, spacious suites and affordable style among frequent business travelers to drive consideration and trial. Marriott also sought to increase reach across generations X and Y, and to boost competitive advantage by differentiating the client from other hotel chains.

Strategy
The strategy was to transform the bland, gray security zones of two major US airports (one on the west coast, one in the midwest) into memorable, unexpected SpringHill Suites-branded environments showcasing the style and comfort found at the hotels.

Airport Council International ticketing data as well as Aviator’s internally developed planning tool APEX (which looks at air travel movements between DMAs) helped assess attractiveness of individual airport terminal security checkpoint opportunities.

A long process of planning and contract negotiations started with various airport media concessionaires and local airport authorities to make this transformation a reality at the two selected airports.
Plan Details
Markets: California and Chicago

OOH Formats:
The activation transformed the queuing areas, security zones, and re-composure areas of security checkpoints at Chicago O’Hare and Oakland International airports into unique Spring Hill Suites-branded environments designed to showcase the inspiring style and space experienced at a SpringHill Suites property, and to offer travelers a needed moment of relief. Elements featured in the zones included actual SpringHill Suites furnishings (couches, chairs, tables), digital video screens, large format adhesive wraps and banners, branded security bins, localized radio, and projection media.

Surround media covering other touch points (airport terminals, inflight, online) was added to reinforce messaging.

Results
• Internal Marriott research showed the Comfort Zones were a key element in driving 150% year-over-year increase in brand awareness.

• 37% of polled passengers said the Comfort Zones made them want to find out more about SpringHill Suites by Marriott

• 38% said the Comfort Zones positively impacted their security area experience

• 76% of those that experienced multiple zones want more to be added

The launched Comfort Zones received major earned media coverage in various channels: CNN, CBS This Morning, USA Today, WSJ & the Chicago Tribune.