Problem
How does a renowned aquarium drive further traffic to its facility?

Solution
Create an interactive OOH campaign, which allows users to create their own aquarium video that serves as a reminder for visiting the facility.

Background
The Monterey Bay Aquarium is a beloved, world-renowned non-profit institution. Each summer, which is peak season for travel and tourism, the Aquarium is faced with the challenge of vying for consumer share of wallet. And this year in particular, the Aquarium wanted a program that encouraged participation and engagement.

Objective
The Monterey Bay Aquarium’s yearly challenge is to develop an integrated media plan that will drive brand awareness and bring the aquarium’s message to life in an engaging way, as well as drive foot traffic through the doors of the facility (i.e., ticket sales). The team was tasked with reaching Women with kids (W25-54), DINKs (A25-54), and Millennials (A18-34).

Strategy
The team developed an integrated media plan involving digital and traditional media (Television, Radio and OOH). Television and Radio were utilized to establish a baseline reach. Digital was utilized to drive online ticket sales. Experiential OOH was utilized to encourage participation and engagement with the brand.

The experiential effort for the 2015 summer campaign was based on a “bait ball”, a phenomenon that occurs when thousands of small bait fish like sardines swarm in a tightly packed, spherical formation and move in perfect unison, as a defensive measure against predators. Chemistry Club created the The Bait Ball Ballet Interactive Experience – a large, mobile touchscreen--one of the biggest ever created-- that traveled to events and concerts throughout the summer.

Users interacted with the Bait Ball in two ways. First, they could use the touchscreen to control the movement of the Bait Ball with their fingers— with a simple tap or drag they could make the giant Bait Ball scatter, re-form, or move dynamically around the screen. The second feature let users create their own Bait Ball show by combining any one of four shapes with any of four music genres. The thousands of sardines would swim into the selected shape to the sound of the music track. It was synchronized swimming of a whole different kind— the bait ball forming a heart to the beat of hip hop, or a star to...
the rhythm of rock and roll, to name just a few combos.

Users were then prompted to enter their email address to have their customized Bait Ball Show video sent to them, so they could share their experience on Facebook and Twitter. The OOH Experiential activation was complete with Brand Ambassadors who helped draw people in and guide them through the experience.

**Plan Details**

**Markets:** San Francisco DMA  
**Flight Dates:** May 2015 - September 2015  
**OOH Formats Used:** Experiential  
**Target Audience:** W25-54 with kids, A25-54 DINKs, A18-34 Millennials  
**Budget:** OOH media was the second largest percentage of the campaign media mix at 29%. The integrated media mix also included Digital (46%), Radio (14%), and Television (12%).

**Results**

In 2015, the Monterey Bay Aquarium welcomed 2.1 million visitors—their third highest attendance ever. Total attendance was also higher in 2015 than the previous four years. The campaign contributed towards a 12% increase in attendance.