



OOH Case Study

New Balance

Problem

How can New Balance leverage a key cultural sports moment to promote the partnership with NBA star, Kawhi Leonard?

Solution

By utilizing contextually relevant out of home in prominent locations.

Background

In Q4 of 2018, New Balance signed a multiyear endorsement deal with Toronto Raptors all-star, Kawhi Leonard. As the Raptors advanced to the 2019 NBA Finals, New Balance identified the ideal opportunity to feature their Kawhi partnership and capitalize on a key cultural sports moment in order to increase brand relevance and ultimately drive sales. The real-time nature of the playoffs presented the challenge of identifying the best out of home placements, as well as receiving client approval and Kawhi approved artwork, within just a few days. Additionally, the creative agency had to work with the client and media partners to quickly adapt the media plan, and develop appropriate contingency plans, depending on whether the Raptors won or lost.

Objective

The objective of the out of home campaign was to drive awareness and create buzz by featuring New Balance sponsor Kawhi Leonard in competing markets during the NBA playoffs, with the ultimate goal of increasing brand relevance and driving sales among the NB Hoops audience.

Strategy

The strategy was to leverage the most impactful, geotargeted, and contextually relevant digital out of home units in the Raptors home market of Toronto, as well as San Francisco (home of opponent Golden State Warriors), during the NBA playoffs. Digital was essential for this campaign due to the short lead time, frequent creative updates, and flighting changes that resulted from each game's outcome. In the city of Toronto, New Balance dominated Yonge Dundas Square with the largest digital spectacular in the entire market, ensuring maximum impact throughout the city. Creative featuring Raptors superstar Kawhi Leonard resonated with fans throughout Toronto. New Balance changed creative three times throughout the campaign to capitalize on the real-time Kawhi conversation, with headlines including "Fun Guy" and "King of the North," and finally updating to "Board Man Gets Titles" upon the Raptors championship victory. New Balance supplemented this spectacular with a digital takeover of Union Station, which connects to Scotiabank Arena, therefore reaching all commuters traveling into Toronto to attend the playoff games. In addition to featuring Kawhi in Toronto, the team worked with New Balance to strategically select a digital billboard right outside of Oracle Arena, home to the Raptors' opponent the Golden State Warriors. New Balance and Kawhi taunted Warriors fans ahead of their next home game with "The King of the North is Coming" warning, with crossed off names of the teams Toronto beat to reach the finals. Golden State was also listed, with the understanding that they would be next! This digital billboard, live for just one week, became a trending topic on Twitter and was even featured on the Jimmy Kimmel show. Strategic unit selections, combined with timely and "edgy" creative, sparked significant conversation among the basketball community and beyond.



Plan Details

Markets: Toronto, Canada & San Francisco, CA

Flight Dates: May 17, 2019 - June 16, 2019

OOH Formats Used: Toronto: Digital Spectacular & Digital Station Takeover; San Francisco: Digital Billboard

Target Audience: Adults 18+

Total Estimated OOH A18+ Impressions: 16,731,029.

Results

Overall, the campaign generated 344,948,165 earned media impressions and 836 stories. San Fran Digital Billboard Earned Media Highlight Video - [Link](#). View Sampling of Toronto Billboard press features - [Link 1](#), [Link 2](#), [Link 3](#), [Link 4](#), [Link 5](#), [Link 6](#).

- Social: NB Canada Instagram followers increased by +565%; Twitter/IG engagements increased by +755%.
- Products: Fun Guy & Board Man T-shirt first release sold out same-day in US & Canada, 2nd round of Fun Guy and Board Man Gets Paid shirts sold out same-day on the NB site T-shirts also sold out for both drops at NYC Flatiron Store in 24 hours. Additionally, exclusive Kawhi Playoff Pack & Championship Pack shoes all sold out within minutes of launch!

Testimonials

The New Balance Kawhi campaign demonstrates the power of location based, contextually relevant digital out of home when paired with the right creative. DOOH offered the ideal medium for New Balance to quickly capitalize on a key cultural sports moment in a bold way, resulting in millions of earned impressions. The clear communication and seamless, nimble workflow among New Balance, agency, and media partners alike were also essential to the success of this campaign. - Allan Apjohn, VP, Group Director, Media-Hub.

Additional Information

The out of home budget nearly doubled as the Raptors continued to win & New Balance saw such strong results with their out of home media presence during the Finals. Out of the larger out of home budget, the San Francisco Digital Billboard alone generated 136 articles, 40K+ Tweets, and 180MM earned media impressions! The out of home budget was roughly 74% of the overall media budget.

