

General Mills, Nature Valley

Background

This company invented the granola bar 60 years ago, positioned as “the snack bar nature intended.” Fast-forward to 2021, and the brand has lost much of its distinction within the \$7.3B category (Mintel).

To separate the brand from the slew of snack bar competitors currently flooding the US market, Nature Valley needed to reinvigorate its connection to nature.

Objective

Due to the always-on reality of pandemic life, consumers felt burnt out and stressed (58% of US workers report suffering from burnout; 44% of consumers claim they’re emotionally drained at the end of the day). Thankfully, studies have shown that spending time in nature helps people de-stress, focus, and re-energize, and the brand decided they could help. The idea was to bring the restorative power of nature to people when they need it most by inviting people to “Take In The Outdoors.” When they’re feeling burnt out, fatigued, and depleted from the ills of modern life and a year of COVID isolation, Nature Valley could respond by bringing them the energy of nature.



Strategy

To bring the restorative power of nature to people, the brand focused on the environments when they were feeling most burned out and stressed.

- Commuting: the morning commute is the most stressful part of their day (138 index vs. all adults)
- Stuck in the ‘concrete jungle’ of urban life: 43% of their target live in an urban environment; including 57% of their LatinX sub-segment
- Feeling Screen Fatigue: they’re spending 145+ more minutes on their phones vs. last year; +39 minutes on their PCs
- Looking for a respite: 25% increase in wellness apps usage; 58% increase in fitness apps usage

In LA, 5 bus shelters closely clustered along Santa Monica Blvd were selected to create a domination effect. All 5 shelters were a first-to-market activation using ceiling wraps to utilize all surfaces of the structure to bring the feeling of being in nature to life. Three of the 5 shelters also had digital panels, which replaced the standard static side panels to create a fully immersive experience. The panels had a back-lit exterior face with an interior full-motion screen. The build also held motion sensors, which, when activated by someone entering the bus shelter, triggered the video and audio. On 2 of the 3 units, the sensor also initiated overhead fans to bring nature’s sights, sounds, and breeze as a moment of relaxation during an everyday commute.

Chicago had 1 large format digital wall and another first to market activation with the addition of a wall-wrap surrounding the screen at the 3-level Clark and Lake CTA station. The unit is a can’t miss location reaching those entering and leaving the major transit hub and those connecting to other lines. The waterfall sounds were on 100%, providing a moment of calm on the escalator ride up or down during the commute.

New York City was comprised of two activations. The first of which, and final first to market activation of the entire campaign, were 10 take-over bus shelters strategically located near subway entrances along the commute route. All bus shelters had 100% of the exterior and interior panels and the first-to-market opportunity of ceiling wraps. Both static and digital exterior panels were incorporated, but all shelters had a static interior to provide a fully immersive moment of calm inside the shelter. Additionally, a bike locker in Brooklyn was wrapped with additional embellishments of plants on the roof, audio, a bench, and wrapping planters around the structure. The unit is in a popular mixed-use area reaching pedestrians, bikers, and vehicular traffic along their daily commute.

All units across the markets were stand-out activations with strong creative and compelling messaging to encourage a connection to nature. Because nature restores and reinvigorates, a media plan was created and built around bringing the feeling of nature to people when they need it most, re-energizing the brand and our consumers alike.

Plan Details

Market: New York City, NY; Chicago, IL; Los Angeles, CA

Flight Dates: June 28th–August 29th, 2021

OOH Format: Bus Shelters, Bike Locker, Transit Digital Wall

Additional Media Formats Used: Digital, Social, Audio

Target Audience: A18+

Budget: \$1,032,174

Results

The combined efforts across media touchpoints has delivered strong impact against key brand perceptions, with 2.25% lift for the campaign to date.

Additional Information

Sizzle reel accessible at the following link for compelling visuals of how the campaign brought nature to urban areas: [Link](#)

Additional team members to note their role with the campaign include:

Greg Manago, President, Content+

Kelsey Whitaker, Head of Innovation, Content+

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