OOH Case Study

Comedy Central

Background

Awkwafina (Nora Lum) burst into the entertainment scene with her blockbuster roles in Ocean's 8 and Crazy Rich Asians, quickly establishing herself as a staple in young Hollywood. Her rise to fame reached new heights when she became the first Asian-American woman to win a Golden Globe for her role in The Farewell in 2020.

Coming off the heels of her Golden Globe win, Comedy Central was set to launch their newest series, Awkwafina is Nora from Queens, starring none other than Awkwafina. This win allowed Comedy Central the opportunity to capitalize on Awkwafina's rising stardom while drawing attention to the show's premiere.

Being a brand new series with significant star-power, Comedy Central sought to go bigger than ever with a massive multi platform campaign—one that was impossible to miss and made noise across social platforms and with consumers and press alike. With this in mind, the team knew opportunities reached beyond a traditional campaign.

The strategy behind this campaign was driven by Comedy Central's continued goal to create provocative experiences for consumers.

Objective

The objective was to bring awareness and drive ratings for Comedy Central's new series Awkwafina is Nora from Queens. Capitalizing on Awkwafina's celebrity, tying her to the Comedy Central brand and connecting the show to its target audience were vital considerations in formulating the media plan. Beyond the ultimate priority of driving awareness to the series, Comedy Central sought to take this a step further by aiming to create a press-worthy activation. The team aimed to highlight Awkwafina and her new series in a thoughtful and provocative manner, honing in on the borough that Awkwafina is from and where the series takes place— Queens, New York!

Strategy

When developing the OOH portion of this campaign, the team leaned on the fact that the most effective OOH approaches include a mix of all OOH elements. The team focused on both reach and frequency tactics, securing a mix of high impact roadside bulletins, squares and premiere panel packages as well as transit media, including bus kings, two-sheets and taxi tops.

This diverse mix of media was plastered across New York and Los Angeles to strategically dominate consumer journeys, making Awkwafina is Nora From Queens impossible to miss. To capitalize on Awkwafina's rising stardom while drawing attention to the

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show's premiere, Comedy Central, in partnership with the MTA, and other media companies, developed a first-to-market experiential stunt that paid homage to the series' titular borough and origins of the series' star.

Comedy Central disrupted Queens natives' daily commutes by taking over New York City's 7 Train subway line, which runs through the heart of Queens. The week leading into premiere, Awkwafina became the guest announcer on Queen's largest subway line, the 7 Train. Awkwafina's signature voice could be heard announcing each stop, providing quirky PSA's and urging riders to tune in to her new show as the trains traversed between Manhattan and Queens. To complement the 7 train activation, Comedy Central put an emphasis on the borough of Queens, with frequency formats lining the streets and saturating the show's target community. Similarly, a Metrocard and coffee giveaway event was activated on the morning of premiere in the heart of Flushing, Queens, just outside the first stop of the 7 train, leaning into the show's namesake borough and directly urging consumers to tune in to the premiere that night.

Plan Details

Market: New York, Los Angeles
Flight Dates: 1/6/2020–2/2/2020
OOH Formats: Bulletins, Premiere Panels, Squares, Bus Kings, USKs, Taxi Tops, Transit Shelters, Phone Kiosks and Experiential Components
Target Audience: Adults 18-49 Cable Subscribers
Audience TRP: Los Angeles: 280.6, New York: 346.8
Audience Reach: Los Angeles: 42.2%, New York: 56.1%
Audience Frequency: Los Angeles: 6.6x, New York: 6.2x
Total Impressions: Los Angeles: 23,945,100, New York: 32,571,300 (taxi tops not included)

Results

The traditional campaign dominated New York and Los Angeles, hitting consumers both above and below ground. In total, the traditional media alone garnered an estimated 56MM+ impressions. Bulletins and two-sheets also made appearances on social, even scoring posts from the show's cast members, including Awkwafina herself, extending the reach cross-channel.

In addition to the traditional media, Comedy Central saw massive results across the board from its 7-train activation. In seven days, the execution took social channels and press by storm. The 7 train takeover was the first activation of its kind, receiving widespread national coverage and massive press attention from the likes of GMA, ABC, CNN, Variety and Adweek, among others. The activation generated an estimated $10MM+ in incremental media value and 36MM+ media impressions during its flight.

The activation concluded in Flushing, Queens on premiere day, where brand ambassadors greeted commuters with free donuts, coffee, and a round-trip subway ride to enjoy the activation. This event reached over 81,000 people on social media in the four hours it was live, helping further promote the premiere that night. The campaign culminated with Awkwafina is Nora from Queens scoring the highest-rated series premiere on Comedy Central since 2016 and the #1 socially trending primetime cable of the night.