



OOH Case Study

Smithsonian Museum of Natural History

Problem

How can the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History encourage families to visit the newly renovated museum, following a five-year closure?

Solution

Through a vivid OOH campaign with messaging that invokes nostalgic feelings for parents with small children.

Background

The Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, located on the National Mall, is free and open to the public 364 days a year. With re-opening of a fully redesigned Fossil Hall (Deep Time), which had been closed for renovation for five years, the museum saw an opportunity to invite local families with children 12 and under back to the museum to participate in this once-in-a-generation moment.

Objective

The Deep Time/Fossil Hall campaign targeted families in the DC-metropolitan area with children 12 and under. The goal was to drive local families back to the museum.

Strategy

The strategy underlying the “Inner Child” campaign for the Fossil Hall was creating an emotional connection with parents. Colorful crayon dinosaur drawings, created by actual children, were the visual focus of the ads. Each was accompanied by playful copy that asked parents to awaken their own inner child. Sample lines include: - “Your childhood is calling. It sounds a bit like, RWARRRR. New exhibit. Familiar wonder.” - “Return to when dinosaurs ruled. Like when you were six. Bring back memories. And make a few.” - “Ancient Wonders. Not-so-ancient admirers. Bring your inner child. And your actual child.” - “Meet your heroes in the flesh. So to speak. An exhibit for the ages. All of them.” - “Where 7-year-olds meet 67-million-year-olds. Bring humans. Especially small ones.”

Plan Details

Markets: Washington DC

Flight Dates: May 31, 2019 - September 15, 2019

OOH Formats Used: Exterior Bus, Metro Digital Boards, Interior bus railcards

Target Audience: Families with children 12 and under.

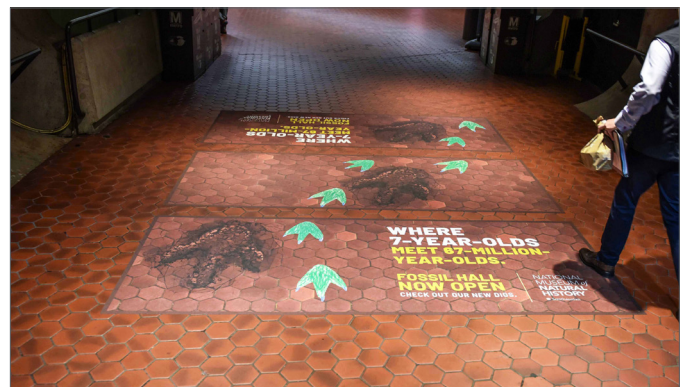
Audience TRPs: 128.6

Audience Reach: 29.22%

Audience Freq: 4.4x

Total Impressions: 7,026,358 million + 9,036,479 Circulations.

The campaign had 6.4 million impressions beyond the buy with WAMATA.



Results

Between May 31 and August 12, 2019, new visitors to our website increased by 40K compared to 2018. Onsite attendance increased by 9.2% to 880,479 visitors between June 8, 2019 through July 24, 2019, compared to 2018. The opening of Fossil Hall received extensive media coverage, both in The Washington Post, and on the Today Show. Publicity describing the volume of opening week attendance appeared in The Washington Post and on DCist.com.

Testimonials

Visitors take selfies with the signage outside the building and groups, including the DC Public Library officials and local schools, have shared both verbally and via social media their appreciation for the campaign.

Additional Information

On social media and inside the museum, we extended the “Inner Child” campaign by asking kids of all ages to create and share their own dino doodles. We received and shared hundreds of drawings, from parents and kids alike.

