

## Gerald R. Ford International Airport

### Background

Gerald R. Ford International Airport (GRR) was aiming to increase passenger numbers in 2024, with a goal of meeting or exceeding their record-breaking 2023 year. The campaign was designed to launch an initiative that would not only bring greater awareness to the nonstop route offerings to a broad audience, but to do so in a unique and unexpected way that could engage their community on a deeper level and create a positive buzz surrounding the Airport.

### Objective

#### Increase Store/Business Facility/Special Event Traffic

Use local OOH media to generate a multi-faceted community engagement initiative. The GRRreat Billboard Hunt for Gerald R. Ford International Airport (GRR) was a four-week event, open to the West Michigan community, that encouraged participants to find and photograph the 30 nonstop destinations offered by the Airport that appeared on poster panels across the city of Grand Rapids. By merging OOH media with a digital engagement component, the Airport sought to both reach audiences and engage their community with fun missions and top prizes. The scavenger hunt software app, Goosechase, was the host platform for the event, and each of the 30 total missions gave a hint to the billboard design that featured one of the Airports' nonstop destinations. A mission was counted as completed when a photograph of the correct billboard was taken and uploaded to the platform, and the top prizes were given to those who completed all 30 missions during the contest period. Participants could see other users' submissions, as well as post comments and reactions when uploading their own photos, creating a positive community among contestants. Digital OOH, social media ads, email marketing, PR, and owned on-premises placements were used to promote the event and incorporated colorful and engaging messaging to communicate the details, generate interest, and ultimately bring awareness to the 30 nonstop routes. Users could simply scan a QR code, or visit the custom splash page, to download the app, and use a custom passcode to access the experience, sign-up, and start completing missions.

### Strategy

55 posters were strategically selected based on their location, and proximity to places where participants could safely park and take a photograph. The use of digital OOH and social tactics were recommended as high-profile, targeted ways to promote the event to the target audiences. The email marketing and owned on-premises displays were a no-cost way to reach current fans of and travelers at GRR, and the added value PR helped to expand awareness to an even broader audience.



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## Plan Details

Market: Grand Rapids MI DMA

Campaign Posting Dates: 1/22/2024 – 2/18/2024

OOH Formats Used: Poster panels (55 total)

Target Demographic: Primarily adults 18+ in the Grand Rapids, Michigan region

Budget: Budget \$15,000 or larger

Impressions: 8,000,000 planned OOH impressions; 18,000,000 delivered OOH impressions

Reach: 75%

Frequency: 32.7x



## Results

- During the months of and directly after this campaign, the airport saw a 15% average monthly increase in travelers from the previous year. Gerald R. Ford International Airport concluded the year with 4,172,068 total passengers, 10% more than their previous record traveler numbers from 2023.
- The scavenger hunt app had 700+ participants, and 2,300+ billboard photo submissions during the event.
- A total of 40 participants completed all 30 missions to earn top prizes from the airport, including flight vouchers, destination apparel, airport swag, and more.
- The campaign generated more than 30,000 social media impressions and 3,300+ webpage views to bring awareness to the scavenger experience, as well as the nonstop route offerings from the Airport.
- Several local, regional, and industry press outlets picked up the story, garnering an estimated 3.8 million added value impressions and awareness for the event and campaign.
- The campaign was also awarded best Community Education and Outreach program by the airline trade association, Airports Council International—North America in their annual Excellence in Airport Marketing, Communications and Customer Experience awards.

