

Peabody Essex Museum

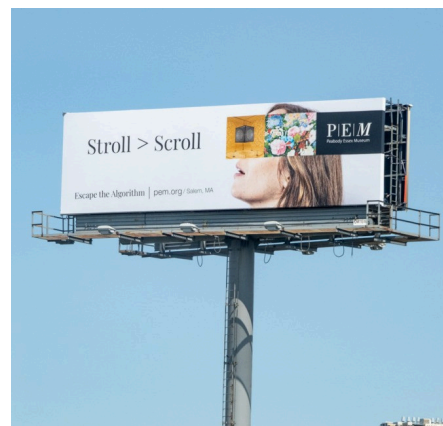
Background

In 2024, the Peabody Essex Museum (PEM) in Salem, Massachusetts, launched a transformative brand campaign aimed at attracting new audiences and redefining the museum experience. This campaign marked PEM's first major brand initiative in nearly two decades, shifting focus from individual exhibitions to promoting the museum's holistic visitor experience.

Objective

Increase Website Visitation

The brand campaign, titled "Escape the Algorithm", positioned PEM as an antidote to the digital saturation of modern life. It emphasized the value of real-world experiences over algorithm-driven digital interactions. The messaging highlighted how visiting PEM offers sensory and intellectual stimulation that contrasts with the often-isolating effects of endless online scrolling. Using a multi-media strategy, "Escape the Algorithm" incorporated OOH, digital advertising and social media to raise awareness and increase traffic to the PEM website, which ultimately generated more interest and foot traffic for the museum. As a cornerstone of the brand campaign, PEM leveraged a broad, yet strategically targeted, mix of OOH media placements to reach their key audiences including assets to reach commuters and potential visitors across Boston and North Shore suburban communities surrounding Salem, MA, encouraging them to consider a visit to PEM as a refreshing alternative to their daily routines.



Strategy

In order to build awareness, and increase consideration and website visits, PEM recognized the need to broaden its audience base, especially in the aftermath of the pandemic, which had led to a decline in attendance. The museum had also been emphasizing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) initiatives and sought to make the institution more welcoming to a diverse public audience. The brand campaign was envisioned as a means to reintroduce PEM to the public, highlighting all of its unique offerings. Key OOH elements included a bulletin located on I-93 North targeting traffic traveling towards Salem, MA - the home of PEM. A static poster in Salem, MA was used for proximity targeting and reaching people visiting Salem, one of New England's most popular tourist destinations. The museum leveraged 4.5M programmatically purchased digital billboard impressions to broaden campaign reach and awareness across the Greater Boston market. To strategically reach commuters and tourists throughout Downtown Boston and North Shore communities surrounding Salem, MBTA transit media assets including Bus Ultra Super Kings, Commuter Rail Interiors, & Commuter Rail 2-Sheets on northern bus routes & rail lines were utilized. The digital livescape network at North Station in Downtown Boston, one of the busiest transit hubs in New England, was used to generate additional awareness among daily commuters from Greater Boston's North Shore Region and among the thousands of tourists who take the MBTA commuter rail from North Station when traveling to Salem.

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Plan Details

Market: Boston MA DMA

Campaign Posting Dates: 7/1/24-11/24/24

OOH Formats Used: Static Bulletins, Static Posters, Digital Bulletins (Programmatic), MBTA North Station Liverscapes, MBTA Bus Ultra Super Kings, MBTA Commuter Rail Station 2-Sheets, MBTA Commuter Rail Interior Car Cards Panels, 2 sheet rail posters

Target Demographic: Broad, diverse audience of museum lovers, local residents, tourists, and first-time visitors to PEM

Budget: Budget \$15,000 or larger

Impressions: 12,146,275

Results

The campaign successfully helped redefine PEM's public image, presenting the museum as a dynamic and engaging destination. By focusing on the overall visitor experience and promoting the museum as a whole, PEM was able to attract a broader audience and generate increased interest and traffic to the museum's website. During PEM's 2024 OOH Brand Campaign, the museum saw increased web traffic among new & existing users, more sessions overall, and more time spent, on average, on their site compared to the same time frame in 2023.

2024 PEM Web Traffic Recap (July-Dec 2024) - compared to same time in 2023:

- Sessions = 1,021,589 (+48.54% YoY change)
- Active Users = 609,356 (+71.54% YoY change)
- New Users = 785,499 (+74.05% YoY change)
- Average Session Duration = 7 Minutes 42 Seconds (+89.52% YoY change).

Source: Google Analytics.

