
SPORTS BRAND WINTER RANGE MARKETING STRATEGIES >
CONSUMER COMPETITIONS, PARTICIPATION, INCENTIVISATION & ATHLETE AMBASSADORS

AW

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ACTIVATIVE



Sports Brand Winter Range Strategies

Winter is now established as another key seasonal battleground in the marketing war between the big sportswear brands and with no Winter Olympics dominating the landscape 2015 marketers are creating campaigns based on own brand **consumer participation competitions**. Unsurprisingly, considering these initiatives aim to motivate people to get out and exercise in the cold, snow, sleet, slush and icy wind (and buy their winter sportswear range), **incentivisation** is playing a crucial role in these campaigns. Whilst all the major sports brands are using seasonally-relevant **athlete ambassadors**, there are a wide variety and tactics on show during Winter 2014/15.



Under Armour's 'I Will - Winter Challenge' is a mass participatory Strava-style programme running in partnership with the mobile app MapMyRun (recently bought by UA), that provides a 'gear up and get out' winter motivational platform for competitive self-improvement. It is supported by ambassador-led advertising from the likes of tennis star Sloane Stevens, skier Lindsay Vonn and sprinter Natasha Hastings.

While Adidas' edgier' #OpenAllWinter, on the other hand, is essentially a consumer snapshot social sharing initiative incentivised by prizes and fronted by some (Red Bull style) daredevil extreme snow sport stunts and ambassadors including slackliner Hayley Ashburn, ice climber Junhee Han and paraglider Jean-Baptiste Chandelier. Led by a central spot by agency Stopp, it promotes the brand's ClimaCool range.

Nike takes a more 'plaayful' approach with its 'Choose Your Winter' campaign (from Wieden + Kennedy, Portland) is unusually fronted by comedian Chris O'Dowd - who adds a new, humorous twist to its usual strident, motivational approach that seems to build further on Nike's previous and rather wry Bradley Cooper voiced 'Possibilities' work.

Promoting Nike's HyperWarm products, O'Dowd's spot is the first of a multi-part series featuring football stars Aaron Rodgers and Jordy Nelson, soccer players Clint Dempsey and Brad Evans, distance runner Mary Cain, figure skater Gracie Gold, snowboarder Johnnie Paxson, hockey's Dion Phaneuf and baseball's Yasiel Puig. Nike is running a series of separate participatory challenges via platforms such as Nike+ Challenges.

Adidas 'Open All Winter' > Adidas launches its global #OpenAllWinter campaign, which is based around encouraging people to socially share their own winter action snapshots, with a stunning stunt by French paraglider Jean-Baptiste Chandelier.

The breathtaking jump forms the climax of the campaign's spearhead TV spot which sees Adidas present its new Climaheat range of outdoor clothing and boots.

The initiative sees Adidas has partner with several of the world's highest proile and most daring extreme snow and ice sports stars - including slackliner Hayley Ashburn and ice climber Junhee Han - who also feature in the creative.

The spread of stars reflects the objective of #openallwinter to revolve around different activities sports enthusiasts can do outside, from training to running and all kind of outdoor sports in snow and ice.

The brand's Climaheat range includes a spread of winter products with 'outstanding insulation properties' to keep the wearer warm in extreme conditions.

The core of the campaign is a competition that invites athletes and brand fans to share their own winter snapshots on Instagram and Twitter.

To enter, consumers simply need to sign up on the Adidas campaign website at <http://www.adidas.co.uk/openallwinter>

Each week a prize is being awarded for the best photo and then of all the weekly winners one grand prize winner will be selected by an athlete jury for 'a winter adventure of a lifetime (a Canadian road trip)' for them and four friends.

This snapshot competition thread is highlighted in an extended version of the original spot.

'With the #openallwinter campaign we want to encourage people to go out and have fun in winter, no matter what the conditions are like,' explains Adidas Outdoor General Manager Rolf Reinschmidt.

'Snow, ice and grim weather doesn't mean staying at home, it's about getting out, being active and enjoying nature.'

A further interesting element to the campaign sees adidas partner with Red Bull Media House on a content distribution deal as part of #OpenAllWinter's media planning.

This marks the first time a campaign in which a third-party brand has natively advertised on Red Bull Media House's own digital properties.

Red Bull Media House may have once been an own-brand content publisher that promotes its own ambassador athletes and musicians and its own brand events, but this adidas deal now sees



Links >

Adidas #OpenAllWinter Website
www.adidas.com/openallwinter

Adidas Outdoor Website
<http://adidas.com/go/outdoorYT>

Adidas Outdoor Facebook
<http://www.facebook.com/adidasoutdoor>

Adidas Outdoor Instagram
<http://www.instagram.com/adidasoutdoor>

Adidas Outdoor Pinterest
<http://www.pinterest.com/adidasoutdoor>

Adidas Outdoor Twitter
<https://twitter.com/adidasoutdoor>

Red Bull Media House Commercial Partnerships
<http://www.redbullmediahouse.com/business/commercialpartnerships.html>



winter season is open

want to win a winter road trip across canada?
get out and share your cold snaps!
#openallwinter



it evolve into a content distributor for other brands too.

Yet another sign that activation needs to change and adapt as the world of traditional media and publishing continues to fragment and the lines between brands and media platforms further erode.

Comment: This Winter sees Jean-Baptiste Chandelier in big demand from advertisers as he also features in the current Volvo V60 Cross Country campaign 'The Descent' along with ultra runner Anton Krupicka and mountain biker Tom Oehler.

Adidas' focus on image-led, consumer-creative social sharing is something of a tactical to Under Armour's participatory and competitive 'Winter Challenge' and to Nike's humour-led 'Choose Your Winter' work.

Let the sports brand 2014/15 Winter Marketing Games commence! <

Links >

Nike Choose Your Winter Website
http://www.nike.com/us/en_us/c/men/cold-weather

Nike 'Choose Your Winter' > As the snow arrives across all 50 US states, Nike readies itself for cold weather with its 'Choose Your Winter' campaign.

The simple idea behind the new Wieden + Kennedy's campaign is that the harsh reality of the winter weather is painful for athletes not wearing Nike's Hyperwarm base layer.

Rolled out in mid November, the campaign is led by a TV spot fronted by comedian Chris O'Dowd.

Funny man O'Dowd plays a spoof weatherman hyperbolically describing the effects of the cold on the human body.

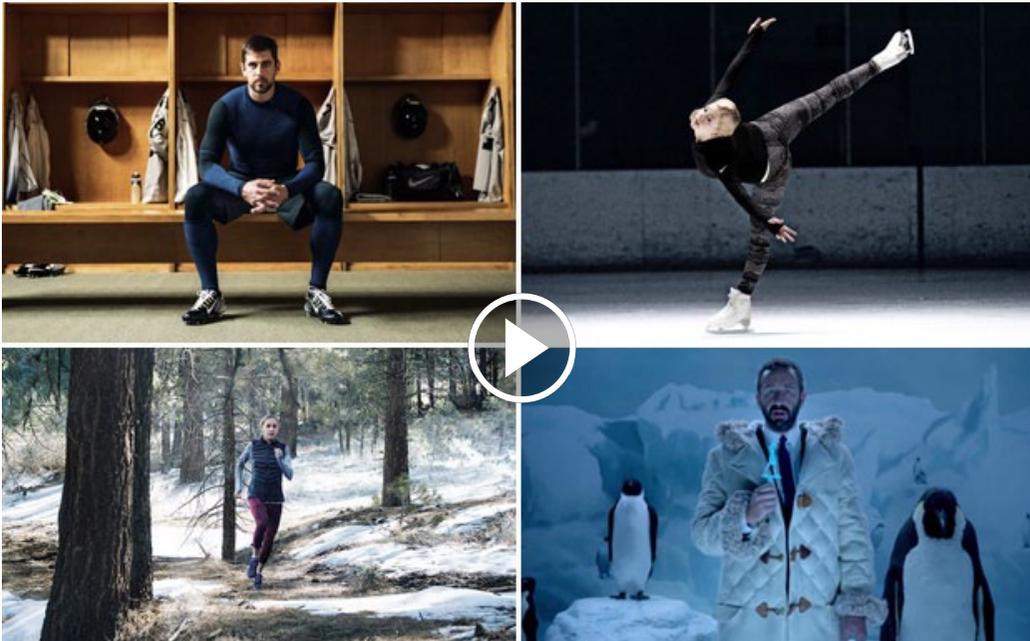
But his dire warnings are completely at mismatched by the on-screen images in which cold-weather athletes go about their business with brains and bodies in tip-top working order.

The commercial features football stars Aaron Rodgers and Jordy Nelson, soccer players Clint Dempsey and Brad Evans, distance runner Mary Cain, figure skater Gracie Gold and snowboarder Johnnie Paxson.

The ad is actually the first in a multi-part set of Nike Wintry spots and those athlete ambassadors lined up to appear in later ads within the campaign include the NHL's Dion Phaneuf and baseball's Yasiel Puig (baseball in the Winter? Surely not!), plus female-focused spots for Nike Women.

The TV work is supported by social strands and drives consumers to the more functional winter wear website.

Comment: While O'Dowd might seem an expectedly left-field choice as a Nike front man - from the lazy layabout character in The IT Crowd to spokesperson for the highly motivated and style-obsessed sports behemoth is some journey - there are some synergies with the wry approach of Nike's Bradley Cooper-voiced 'Possibilities' spots from last year. <



The image is a screenshot of the Nike.com website. At the top, the browser address bar shows 'n/us/en_us/' and the Nike logo with 'Nike.com'. The navigation bar includes 'MEN', 'KIDS', and 'EXPLORE' with dropdown arrows. A search bar contains the text 'WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?'. On the right, there are links for 'SITE FEEDBACK' and 'EMAIL SIGN UP', and a 'JOIN' button. The main content area features a large photograph of Aaron Rodgers, a football quarterback, sitting on a wooden bench in a locker room. He is wearing a dark blue, long-sleeved athletic top and dark pants. To his right, the text 'WIN IN ANY CONDITIONS' is displayed in large, bold, white capital letters. Below this, a smaller line of text reads 'Our best layers to help keep you warm, dry and moving all winter.' At the bottom right, there is a button labeled 'CHOOSE YOUR WINTER' and a video player thumbnail with a play button icon. In the bottom left corner, the text 'Aaron Rodgers Football Quarterback' is visible.

Under Armour 'I Will - Winter Challenge' > Under Armour's 'Winter Challenge' campaign is built around a participatory initiative that also acts as an umbrella platform to promote the brand's winter ColdGear range.

While Nike added a humorous tone to its classic stylish self-motivational approach and adidas' snapshot sharing strategy, Under Armour teams up with training app MapMyFitness to provide a winter platform for self improvement and to motivate people to 'gear up and get out' - by walking, running, biking and hiking.

MapMyFitness is a training app enabling people around the globe to map, record and share their exercise routes and workouts (plus track activity, log food and drink intake etc) via an online database.

The initiative revolves around a co-branded app and a web hub - both of which trumpet the challenge via the following copy:

'Under Armour athletes don't let anything stand in the way of getting better. And we want YOU to prove that you have the WILL to train, no matter what elements you face this winter.'

The participatory programme challenges brand fans to record an outdoor workout for at least 45 minutes, five days a week, every week for the duration of the campaign (from 18 November to 23 December) to 'show the world your WILL'.

As an incentive, 50 weekly winners will receive an Under Armour 'Swag Bag' that includes items from its core 'ColdGear' product line.

Furthermore, at the end of the contest, one Grand Prize Winner will scoop a \$2000 gift card and a complete, head-to-toe ColdGear wardrobe.

The platform is just part of a wider global ad local marketing push for UA's winter sportswear product lines from ColdGear in Japan, o MagZip in thus US, as well as its ongoing endorser-fronted, content-led, documentary-style, web-based Border Patrol series in the US and Canada.

Comment: Thus far more than 47,000 people are participating in the UA Winter Challenge.

That's serious brand engagement!

Typical for a brand that this month was voted

Ad Age's 2014 Marketer Of The Year.

An accolade that didn't initially seem likely back in January when Under Armour was under fire over the performance of its uniforms for the US Winter Olympic Team.

This chapter of UA's memorable 2014 actually began back in late 2013 with its 'I Will' initiative launching its ColdGear Infrared range and unveiling its US Winter Olympic uniforms.

With a launch event in the heart of US ski country, Denver, that campaign was fronted by Olympic skier Lindsey Vonn, freeskiier Bobby Brown and snowboard cross athlete Dominique Maltais and TV work that included a spot narrated by CEO Kevin Plank (co-branded with Dick's Sporting Goods), which came in various cuts and versions too, as well as other TV creative led by endorsers like Dustin Craven.

This campaign launch coincided with a preview of UA's 2014 Winter Olympic uniforms for the speedskating and bobsled teams.

Yet when it came the Winter Olympics themselves Under Armour found itself under serious criticism for its US Olympic speedskating team uniforms - which were actually cited as a possible factor in the team's poor performances.

Yet, rather than doing what so many other brands would - panic, run scared and go dark - UA actually responded with the opposite tactic.

Under Armour believed in its philosophy, reputation and that it had sufficient brand equity to endure a few days of criticism before pro-actively getting its own story out to the marketplace.

The company offered extensive media access to those executives who defended the suits and simultaneously used endorsers like Lindsey Vonn to argue on its behalf.

This response is already being cited as a textbook case of successful crisis communications (see <http://adage.com/article/cmo-strategy/armour-handled-biggest-pr-crisis/295023/>).

And the company then followed up with the fantastic, much praised and awarded 'I Will What I Want' women's campaign (see previous case study) which played a major role in this month's Ad Age accolade. <



Polar Vortex? We got you covered. Join the Winter Challenge to win: bit.ly/1uqhPHv



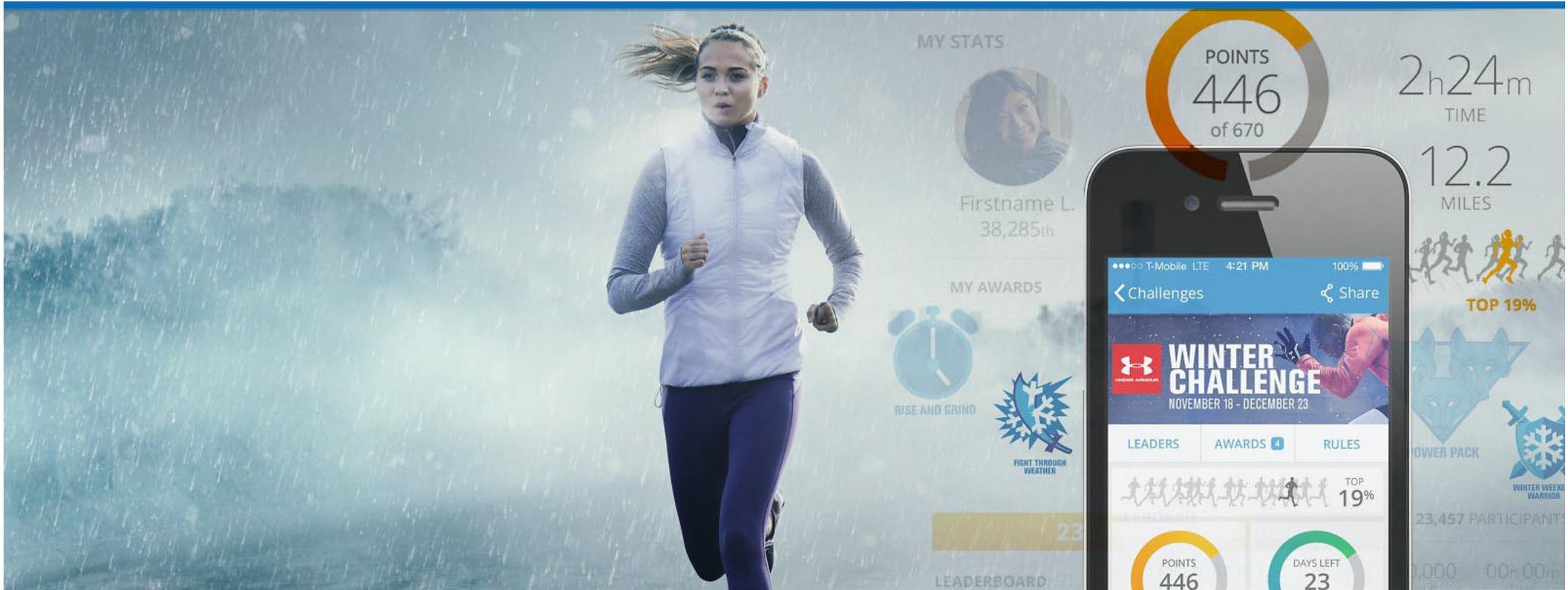
Links >

Under Armour Winter Challenge
<https://www.underarmour.com/en-us/sports/running/mens>

Under Armour Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/underarmour>

Under Armour Twitter
<https://twitter.com/underarmour>

MayMyRun
<http://www.mapmyrun.com/challenges/>



WE SUPPLY THE TECHNOLOGY. YOU SUPPLY THE WILL.

Under Armour athletes don't let anything stand in the way of getting better. And we want YOU to prove that you have the WILL to train, no matter what elements you face this winter.

Record an outdoor workout for at least 45 minutes, 5 days a week, every week from November 18 to December 23, and show the world your WILL.

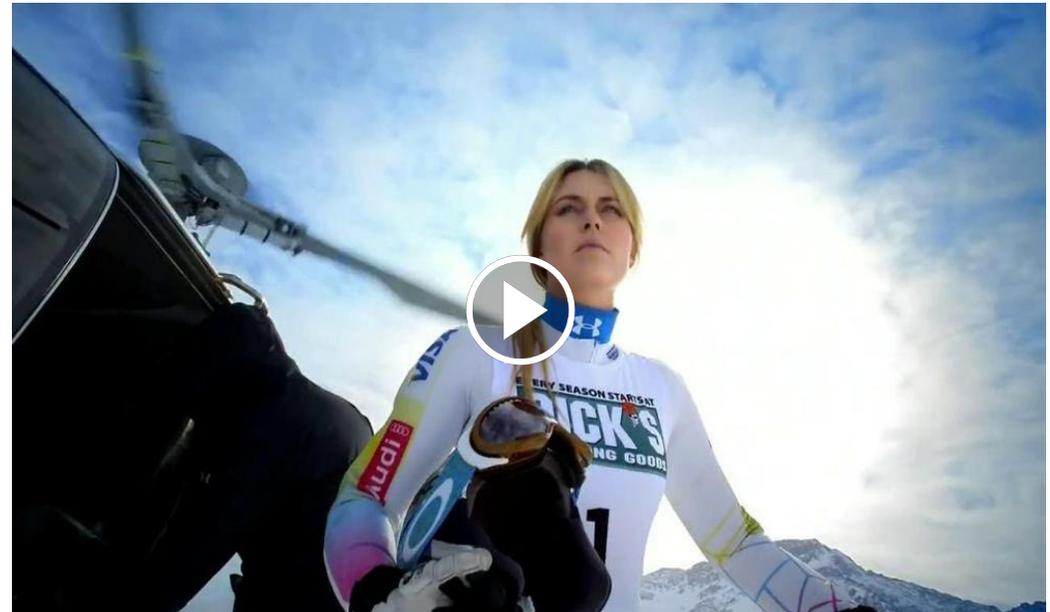
Ten weekly winners will get an Under Armour Swag Bag packed with Under Armour ColdGear. At the end of the contest, one Grand Prize Winner will score a \$2000 gift card and a complete, head-to-toe, ColdGear hookup. Think you have what it takes? Join now and show us you've got the WILL of an Under Armour athlete.

JOIN THIS CHALLENGE

I would like to receive promotional emails

By clicking the link button and joining the Challenge, you acknowledge that you have read and agreed to the [MapMyFitness Privacy Policy](#) and the [MapMyFitness Terms and Conditions of Use](#). The Challenge sponsor reserves the right to email participants with promotional offers and other messages. To opt-out of these emails, deselect the box above.

mapmyfitness
WORKOUT GAMES
NOV. 29, 2014 ← → FEB. 8, 2015
\$100,000+ IN PRIZES & AWARDS
JOIN NOW



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Sponsorship is flourishing in this new environment as brands seek symbiotic passionate platforms around which to build consumer conversations.

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Our role is to explore, filter, analyse and advise - we stimulate marketers across the entire space: from traditional sponsorships and to brand tie-ins, to strategic collaborations and commercial partnerships.

A key aspect of the value in our work lies in linking standout sponsorship activation to contemporary socio-cultural, economic and technology trends and in making connections, finding fresh and daring ideas and identifying breakthrough thinking.

We work with some of the world’s most forward thinking brands from right across the partnership space - including property owners, brands, agencies, media businesses and other sponsorship professional services companies.

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Our subscribers receive trends’ insights, creative stimulus, idea generation, competitor/sector/property analysis and strategic planning intelligence.

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- > Insight: monthly analytical trend/property briefing service
- > Platform: live curated activation online magazine

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