



# ACTIVATIVE ANNUAL 2016/17

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SPONSORSHIP ACTIVATION, PARTNERSHIP LEVERAGE & SPORTS MARKETING

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Most sports and entertainment marketers, like their cultural commentator counterparts and a fair few fans too, feel that 2016 was a disappointment.

There, we said it!

Honesty is always the best policy.

Admittedly, there was plenty of brave and brilliant activation to admire and learn from - just read on as once again this year's Activative Annual showcases plenty of impressive and innovative work.

But, while late 2015 teased us with futuristic predictions of how deep learning algorithms and artificial intelligence was about to change the leverage landscape forever, 2016 didn't deliver much more than an Alec Baldwin 'Amazon Echo' Super Bowl spot, a Serena Williams' led IBM Watson cognitive thinking campaign and the relentless rise of property-related programmatic.

Plus, early excitement around blockbuster events like the Euros and Olympics soon ebbed amidst terror fears and dull football in France and economic and political problems, Zika and drugs scandals related to Rio.



Indeed, these twin sports behemoths threw up several significant new sponsor challenges: think of UEFA sponsor Carlsberg's problems with French alcohol ad restrictions and the athlete ambassador ambush anarchy that followed the IOC's Rule 40 relaxation.

By the middle of the year, Euro 2016 rolled out plenty of football leverage work with too many lads ads, national stereotype spots and country cliché commercials.

While too much unimaginative Rio-related marketing ran in parallel with criticism of NBC's Olympic old-school TV primetime strategy in the era of real-time social, a Coca-Cola marketer saying 'being an Olympic sponsor is a disadvantage' and Ryan Lochte sponsors like Speedo, Ralph Lauren, Gentle and Airweave scrambling to control the damage.

Speaking of hair removal sponsors and mattress partnerships, sometimes 2016 felt like the sponsorship world had tilted from its axis - especially when it came to left-field category partners: if the NFL can have an official humus spon-

sor in Sabra and Lochte can be a bedding brand endorser, Man Utd decided it should sign up a pillow partner (Milly). Eclectic partnerships ran right through the year: Werner ran a clever #OfficialLadderOf the NCAA Final Four campaign, Chobani activated its official Team USA yoghurt sponsorship rights via #NoBadStuff and Team GB sofa partner DFS ran a quirkily intriguing Olympic campaign.

What next - an official ball bearing sponsor or a teddy bear brand partner perhaps?

Back at the beginning of the year, most marketers felt too many of the (\$4m for 30-seconds) Super Bowls spots lacked sufficient emotional punch and inspirational power. It's unfair to single out just one ad, but surely in the year of Donald Trump, NFL sponsor Anheuser-Busch InBev must have known that political satire needed to be sharper than its Amy Schumer and Seth Rogen fronted 'The Bud Light Party' campaign.

Indeed, as 2016 drew to a close, we witnessed several sponsors and sports brands tripping up over Trump: after the Hawkers/Perez and New

Balance social media fiascos one wonders whether brands will ever learn when to stay silent on social.

Yet, amidst the dud campaigns, dull creative and crazy categories, there were diamonds dotted across the landscape and the Activative Annual unearths and showcases the stand-outs.

The objective of our yearly overview reflects Activative's wider mission: to identify the best work, cutting edge creative, brave thinking, to explore the top tech developments and key strategic trends driving sponsorship activation and sports and entertainment marketing forward.

The Activative Annual curates the gold standard.

Gold is a colour most often associated with (and legally protected by) the Olympics, but 2016 was bookended by some golden NFL prize-led initiatives: Pizza Hut ambushed the Super Bowl (and leveraged the US pizza industry's biggest day of the year) with edible, 24 carat gold pizzas delivered in a special golden box with a gold \$100 Pizza Hut gift card, while Bud Light made amends for its Big Game political disappointment at Thanksgiving with a 'Strike Gold' on-pack, gilt-can giveaway of 'Super Bowl Tickets For Life'.

An impressive 300 million fans tuned in to watch the climax of Euro 2016 and we were impressed with the strategic sense of Mercedes' multi-platform, multi-phase 'Vive La Mannschaft' work activating its German national team rights, while Adidas steadily grew into the brave and clever #NeverFollow idea it launched during France 2016 through the year. (Is the Adidas/Pogba/Man Utd alliance the perfect sports marketing triumvirate?)

Tactically, much of Carlsberg's Euro 2016 'If' and 'Probably' content (think hidden camera 'Tube Seat' and 'Chugger Squad' stunts) was tactically impressive and its generally intelligent response to beer marketing restrictions was admirable.

Creatively (and statistically), the tournament's top spot was Nike's Ronaldo led 'The Switch' - the spearhead film in its #SparkBrilliance campaign.

In terms of key Euro 2016 creative concepts, both #OrangeSponsorsYou (with its fun, tweet the Eiffel Tower social/projection/shareable strand) and Hyundai's #RealFansFirst (with its young fan storytelling, 'Digital Fan Park' and 'Real Fans Li-

cence') both put fans first in leverage strategies based on a 'supporters before soccer' strategy.

Elsewhere at the Euros, Pepsi Max's high-tech 'Volley 360' and Hyundai's ambitious 'FanDome' were experiences that intrigued us. Volvo's Zlatan work, German FA sponsor Lufthansa's 'Fanhansa', Buffon's fan tattoo in MasterCard's 'Some Call It Madness, We Call It Priceless' campaign and Iceland's 'Power Of Frozen' Iceland national team partnership all made us smile. While Paddy Power's #ViveLaBantz made us shudder.

Another interesting aspect to official Euro 2016 partner activation was the arrival on the mega global sports event landscape of new Asian sponsor brands: such as Hisense's 'Quest For Glory' & 'Feel Everything', SOCAR's 'Make Your Debut' and Turkish Airline's 'Europe's Best'.

Geographical partnership power is shifting.

UEFA sponsors will now be applying their strategic brainpower to develop coherent plans for the no-host/16-host Euro 2020 tournament: a polarising idea that is both a planning nightmare and a potential opportunity (championed by former UEFA boss Michel Platini who has since been banned from football for financial irregularities).

The current tattered state of European politics further complicates Euro 2020 geographic, creative, thematic and messaging decisions.

Later in the summer, Brazil's tanking economy, citizen dissent and political turmoil, coupled with Russian state sponsored doping provided a challenging backdrop to accompany the beautiful TV pictures of the Rio Games.

Inevitably, both in sporting terms and marketing work, it was Olympic superhero Usain Bolt who sprinted to the event's rescue (again).

Many stand-out Rio sponsor campaigns starred Bolt: including Gatorade's beautiful 'The Boy Who Learned To Fly' animation, Nissan's feisty 'Bolt vs Flame' work, Virgin Media's '9.58-Seconds #BeTheFastest' neatly matched message and media work and the funky Puma #BeatBot.

The old-school Olympic ethos (cross-border/multi-cultural/participation) still drove some good creative; from the birth of and campaigns around the Refugee Team, to sponsor Samsung's success-







ful super spots 'The Chant' and 'The Anthem'.

Other notable Rio sponsorship activation, marketing campaigns, ads, and promotions included: P&G's excellent, ongoing 'Thank You Mum - Strong', Coca-Cola's #ThatsGold, AirBnB's 'Alternative Accommodation', Hershey's 'Hello from Home', Samsung's 'School of Rio' and Nissan's Team GB work, as well as Always' '#LikeAGirl - Keep Playing' and Apple's 'Human Family'.

Probably the biggest Rio 2016 marketing story (which led to some of the Games' best work) emerged from the IOC bowing to athlete pressure and contemporary media reality by relaxing its Rule 40 non-sponsor, athlete endorser restrictions.

While official partners were concerned about how this would change the Olympic sponsorship ecosystem, ambushers went to town in a big way.

Unsurprisingly, Nike led the way with its impressively integrated 'Unlimited' campaign: which revolved around content and films featuring a myriad of athletes from Nike's endorser stable such as Rio stand-outs like Mo Farah, Simone Beal and a bevy of basketballers. The big name, star led content was linked to an amateur 'Unlimited You' strand and a striking central 'Unlimited Future' babies commercial narrated by Bobby Cannavale, while the spot starring Chris Mosier (Team USA's first transgender athlete) really stood out.

Yet industry consensus and data both suggest it was Nike's new-ish rival Under Armour's #RuleYourself campaign (led by its brilliant Michael Phelps film - see page 25) that stood at the top of the Rio Olympic marketing podium.

As for IOC commercial partner planning, Tokyo will offer plenty of (tech-led) opportunities, but a post-Bolt Olympics means big shoes (spikes) to fill and there are also the sponsor/broadcaster challenges/opportunities posed by the IOC's own new Olympic Channel to consider.

If there was one campaign that edged out Under Armour for the Rio 2016 marketing gold it was UK Paralympic broadcaster Channel 4's brilliant 'Super Humans' (see page 49).

If the secret to great Games marketing is to tell a story through visually compelling creative and content across multiple channels that

resonates globally, pulls heartstrings, is dynamic and aspirational, and that blazes a new trail and changes thinking and behaviour - then Channel 4 nailed it!

Amongst other stunning Paralympic campaigns were the organising committee's brilliant Brazil behavioural change 'Mindchanger Workout', #FillTheSeats and 'Odds By Adidas' in India.

There was also plenty to admire about the Australian Paralympic Committee's 'Believe' initiative, Paralympics GB's #Supercharge and Cadbury's 'Bring On The Joy' partnership with the New Zealand Paralympic team.

Overall, if there is one final lesson we can learn from Rio, the Ryan Lochte fiasco teaches us that if you are an Olympian and you tell tall tales then you (and your sponsors) will have to spend time in public purgatory (well, on 'Dance With the Stars' anyway).

As for other 2016 learnings that predict how 2017 might pan out, you'll find plenty of material in our Annual's 'Top 10 Tech Trends' and 'Top 10 Strategy Trends' that follow.

Looking ahead to 2017, well, there's always the promise (again) of fascinating AI work that's a bit more revolutionary than Baldwin's Amazon Echo Super Bowl ad, IBM Watson's cognitive thinking tennis campaign and IBM's French Open #RGRobot and more intriguing than the predictably relentless march of property-related and fan-focused programmatic.

How sponsors respond to the devious and contentious politics of 2016 will also be interesting. Will we see some brands deciding between isolationist or collaborative positions like politicians have? Perhaps consumer brands can learn from sponsors of sports leagues around the world who are adept at understanding how to market to rival sets of opposed, tribal fans?

There's plenty of evidence that the rise of women's sport will continue - perhaps we have reached a tipping point for women's sports sponsorships.

While the balance of sports organisation and team boards remains wholly unequal, the momentum behind women's sport continues to grow fast: the number of women playing sport regu-



larly in the UK, for example, has reached a record high of 7.21 million in 2016 and is growing faster than men's (according to Sport England shows) and is rising faster than men's

The year saw several signposts that continue to close the wage, audience and viewing gaps: from the NFL's 'Rooney Rule' in the USA, to England Netball going full time and a record SSE Women's FA Cup crowd, to brilliant ongoing campaigns like Sport England's #ThisGirlCan, Always' 'Like A Girl - Keep Playing', L'Oreal's #WorthSaying Golden Globes work, Reebok's #PerfectNever, Nike's 'Da-Da-Ding in India and 'Margot & Lilly' in the US, to the ICC's 'Who Runs The World?' the RFU's women's team #RedRoses rebrand, Gatorade's 'Forget Me' and Ritz's US Women's National team animations.

Meanwhile, there are plenty of predictions about redefining masculinity as societies begin to embrace (and market to) more nuanced versions of masculinity.

It will be fascinating to see how these trends evolve across the sports sponsorship landscape.

The Activative team hopes to finally see some stand-out sponsor activation that reflects and leverages the incredible growth of eSport.

Sure, in 2016 plenty of big US sports franchises and European football clubs have created their own teams, behemoth sports broadcasters like Sky & ESPN (not to mention social media giants) bought rights, the prize money got bigger, the live venues grew larger and the number of fans/viewers are huge (more than 100 million a month are watching on Twitch).

But, while there are global goliath brands getting involved from Coca-Cola to Samsung, our opinion is that there still hasn't been much stand-out, bold and brilliant, award-winning activation or leverage yet.

Perhaps next year?

And as for our very own Activative New Year's wish for 2017?

We most sincerely hope that there isn't a sports team, a band, a film crew, TV cast, or a theatre company anywhere left on earth that hasn't already done the mannequin challenge.

Enough already! <



## Top 10 Tech Trends >

Virtual Reality & 360°

Augmented Reality & Live Data

Snapchat Sponsorship

Apps, Snaps & Facial Maps

Instagram Bait

Facebook Live

Real-Time, In-Game Auctions

Geo-Location & Thermal Activation

Tech'd Up Touch Screens

Proto AI

### Virtual Reality & 360° >

VR and 360° films – everyone in entertainment is doing it. And we mean everyone!

It's arguably the trending tech innovation of the year.

And why not, VR immerses us in our passion properties - transporting us into stunning on-pitch and the on-stage experiences.

The last 18 months have seen the VR camera at events everywhere (although geographically North America accounts for 79% of the global market) and it is becoming an increasingly practical activation option. According to a November 2016 CCS report, VR will continue to expand exponentially between 2016 and 2024 – forming a market worth US\$25bn by 2021.

This year work wasn't just dominated by work from brands who make the products - like NFL partner Microsoft's Hololens Super Bowl spot and Samsung activating its cycling, golf, football, netball, Olympic, rugby and surfing sponsorships via VR – but by sponsors and rights owners across the sport, music, arts and culture brands (we loved Spain's Dali Museum's 'Dreams Of Dali').

Visa, to take just one example, has used VR to activated partnerships stretching from the Chicago Bears and the New England Patriots, to NFL Draft Day and both the Summer and Winter Olympics.

While tennis, to note just a few initiatives from just one sport, saw VR campaigns from brands as diverse as American Express (US Open 'Like A Pro), IBM (#RG360), Jaguar (#FeelWimbledon), Robinsons' #TasteOfWimbledon, Stella Artois' Wimbledon work and an ATP/Playstation/Infosys VR experience at the Barclays World Tour Finals.

While Cleveland Cavaliers fans found both Budweiser offering them a VR experience via bespoke Bud cardboard headsets designed to double as beer carrying cases for the May/June playoffs and then enjoyed

Nike's celebrator VR Ring-Wearing Experience in October.

Yet, for now, the headsets remain expensive (even though the component price may well tumble fast just as TVs, tablets and smartphones have) and thus the platform remains niche.

It is worth noting that the avalanche of VR activation in the last 18 months has almost all been leading-edge, low-reach work.

The next, full-on phase of VR leverage won't come until the tech goes mainstream and that looks likely to be decided by the gaming and entertainment industries rather than by sponsorship marketing.

Reality check! Looking ahead more marketers must ask themselves whether the innovation in itself is still enough to excite and engage?

These days you need a genuine event (like a new stadium or stand perhaps), a reason why you are doing it now (like the first game of a season when that new stand opens) and some genuine consumer insight (such as the fact that the majority of Premier League club supporters never come to see a live game in person, let alone get into the dressing room, walk down the player tunnel and onto the pitch on match days).

In other words, think like Standard Chartered & Liverpool FC did for their 'This Is Anfield' virtual reality campaign. <

### Augmented Reality & Live Data >

Did Pokémon Go finally make augmented reality mainstream?

Until the revived mid-1990s video game went viral and drove more than 100 million downloads in its first few weeks, most people thought AR was something for tech geeks and sci-fi freaks.

But by the summer McDonald's, one of the mass market's biggest brand behemoths, had signed a sponsorship deal that turned McDonald's restaurants into Poké-Stops or gyms. A move followed by deals



Standard Chartered



with other mega mainstreamers like Starbucks. With advertisers seeking to boost footfall paying on a 'cost per visit' basis (not dissimilar to Google 'cost per click' model).

Suddenly augmented reality had gone from leading-edge gimmickery to a widespread trend for all sorts of sponsors and popular properties. In fact 2016 was awash with AR activation.

In a campaign that showed just how far we have come since McDonald's 2014 World Cup 'Go!' augmented reality activation, 2016 saw NHL sponsor Tim Hortons bring the new hockey season to life via an augmented reality trading card gaming app that linked to its cups.

The Canadian quick service restaurant chain linked the NHL's World Cup Of Hockey' tournament with the new season via an Upper Deck 'NHL Trading Cards Collector's Series' partnership that came with an augmented reality gaming twist.

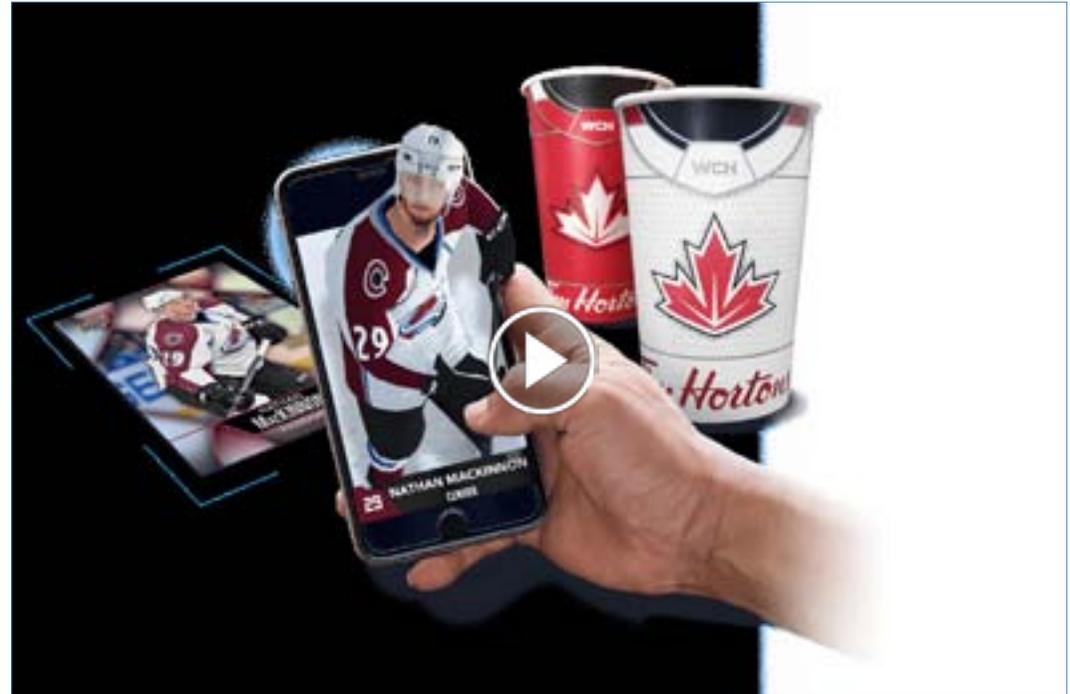
The multi-platform promotion encouraged hockey fans to buy (in-restaurant) card pack sets (for \$1 when purchased with a drink) and download a branded augmented reality hockey card mobile app which scanned the cups and cards to trigger an AR gaming component that brought alive NHL stars (including Sidney Crosby and Nathan MacKinnon) alongside their personal stats and uncovered hidden animations and team logos.

For example, when the on-cup maple leaf logo is scanned, the device screen displays an arena complete with crowd, lights and a giant beverage cup in centre ice over the real environment background.

Thus, augmented reality brings new engaging experiences to traditional concepts to boost engagement and drive excitement.

Which links to another aspect of the role augmented reality is increasingly playing in the fan/property engagement space: namely enhancing the live, broadcast experience.

In recent years, most event-related, match data-driven programmes have been tied to a secondary device, but 2016 saw an interesting three-way tie-up between ESPN, Red Bull Me-





**HOW WE TRANSFORMED AN ICONIC SUPER BOWL MOMENT FOR A FEW INTO AN IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE FOR EVERYONE**

**INSIGHT**  
Every year the Super Bowl champions are crowned with the iconic Gatorade dunk — the ultimate symbol of victory viewed by millions, but only experienced by a select few.

**IDEA**  
Let everyone share the thrill of victory with an augmented reality movie. Snapchat's experience that allowed fans to create user-generated videos of themselves getting virtually dunked.

**RESULTS**  
It was the most shared and watched ad of the Super Bowl, and it took over 100 million views.

8.2 MILLION VIDEOS → 165 MILLION TOTAL VIEWS

dia House and Intel to use the latter's Curie technology to track live athlete performance data and provide real-time statistics (on speed, velocity, torque, height, length, turn angles etc) at the X-Games which fed both to coaches and directly into the primary ESPN on-screen broadcast. Thus making the live event feed more engaging, relatable and entertaining for audiences.

Thus AR is really now starting to change both the sports broadcasting experience as well as sponsorship activation. <

#### Snapchat Sponsorship >

At the beginning of 2016, trend watchers said it would be the year of Snapchat Olympics and the Snapchat Euros. While this didn't quite happen, without doubt Snapchat and its various guises, extensions and additions was one of the activation channel trends of the year.

Snapchat's striking simplicity and its ability to engage its users has seen it develop into a viable sports and entertainment marketing channel for both B2B and B2C businesses.

Part of its unchecked forward motion lies in its multiplying extensions which sponsors and rights owners activated across throughout the year in numbers far too vast to cover here.

Some of our highlights ranged from Snapchat Lens (neatly dovetailed into NAB's AFL 'Mini Legends' campaigns), to Snapchat Filters (like Anheuser-Busch In-Bev's MLB World Series 'Cub Fan Bud Man' activation strand), to Snapchat Live Story (used cleverly by many brands such as Pepsi at the Super Bowl), Snapchat Games (like Gatorade's US Open 'Serena Williams Match Point') and most recently Snapchat Spectacles (late November saw the NHL franchise The Minnesota Wild become the first US sports team to run a campaign on this new channel).

As for next year, well, there are reasons

2016 saw Snapchat filed for a \$20-25bn IPO.

It's not just because it now boasts 150m daily active users (60m in the US/Canada and 50m in Europe), or because 30% of them are millennials, or even because they post 9000 snaps per second. But because its potential for consumer and revenue growth is huge.

Snapchat accounts for 32% of US social network users, but only gets 2.3% of social network ad dollars. The growth curve potential is tantalising. eMarketer's predicts Snapchat revenues will rise 155% (from \$367m to \$935m) in 2017. This would see it overtake Twitter. And beyond that, who knows. After all, Facebook's 2016 Q3 ad revenue rose 59% to \$4.3bn, while Google's jumped 18%\$ to \$19.8bn, so there is plenty of potential. <

#### Apps, Snaps & Face Maps >

Face-mapping is now sophisticated enough to be regarded as reaching maturity and thus it is becomingly reliably and economically accessible to brands. The potentials for personalisation of the technology is really starting to revolutionise some sectors - such as the beauty industry. But in the sports world, one of its tactical benefits is its ability to customise fans to team and link supporters to sports events they can't attend in person in all new ways.

One of the year's interesting activation trends has seen sponsors develop apps that utilise facial mapping technologies to generate personalised property-related fan content and then share it socially both engage, boost reach and maximise value for money.

One fantastic and award-winning example of this approach was NCAA US college football sponsor Nissan's #DieHardFan (see page 29), but probably our favourite facial mapping focused initiative was Gatorade's Snapchat-led socially successful 'Super Bowl Dunk'.

Gatorade's big splash on Super Bowl

Sunday saw it create a sponsored Snapchat Lens. All NFL sponsors are largely limited by the league's rigorous in-stadium branding restrictions, but since 1984 Gatorade has become part of the on-field Super Bowl winners' iconic Gatorade Dunk victory celebration.

But the dunk is only ever experienced by a few football stars and coaches, so in 2016 the energy drink scaled up the stunt on Super Bowl Sunday by spreading it socially via animated Snapchat Lens personal videos that blended facial imaging and animated dunk footage to enable Snapchatters to virtually experience it and share it with their friends. Despite the minimal branding, just a single 'G' on the cooler which flashed on each screen for a split second, the aim was to offer fun brand engagement and drive game-partnership awareness and all metrics show its beat all objectives.

The campaign saw high enjoyment and happiness scores and racked up a record number of Snapchat views (165 million) with a linked ripple effect across social media and plenty of PR too,

Friends sharing content over and over is perhaps the most powerful piece of marketing and that's what made this one of the biggest and best 2016 Super Bowl ads and it didn't even run on TV.

While Snapchat sponsored lenses are exactly cheap (between \$500,000 - \$750,000), they certainly look to offer value compared to the \$4m cost of buying a 30-second Super Bowl TV spot. Especially when the TV audience is 110 million and the Snapchat views were 165 million. <

**Instagram Bait >**

The rise of the photo sharing social network showed no signs of slowing in 2016.

By late November, 32% of all Internet users had Instagram, which boasts 500+ million active monthly users (80% non USA) who share 95m photos/videos each day and 40 billion to date.

It is a sense of authenticity and a lack of commercial manipulation that are big drivers of Instagram's current popularity (and believability).

In 2016, for example, fans turned to Instagram (rather than newspapers or websites) to see whether rumours about Paul Pogba's return to

Man Utd were true.

Instagram is a current user-generated content channel champion and so many brands feel being featured on the feed is the holy-grail of word-of-mouth marketing.

Not surprising if Instagram's own data is to be believed: after all, it suggests 72% of customers claim seeing Instagram photos of a product increases their chances of buying and 38% say they 'frequently purchase' products they find on Instagram.

So, inevitably, Instagram is seen as a powerful, albeit indirect activation platform.

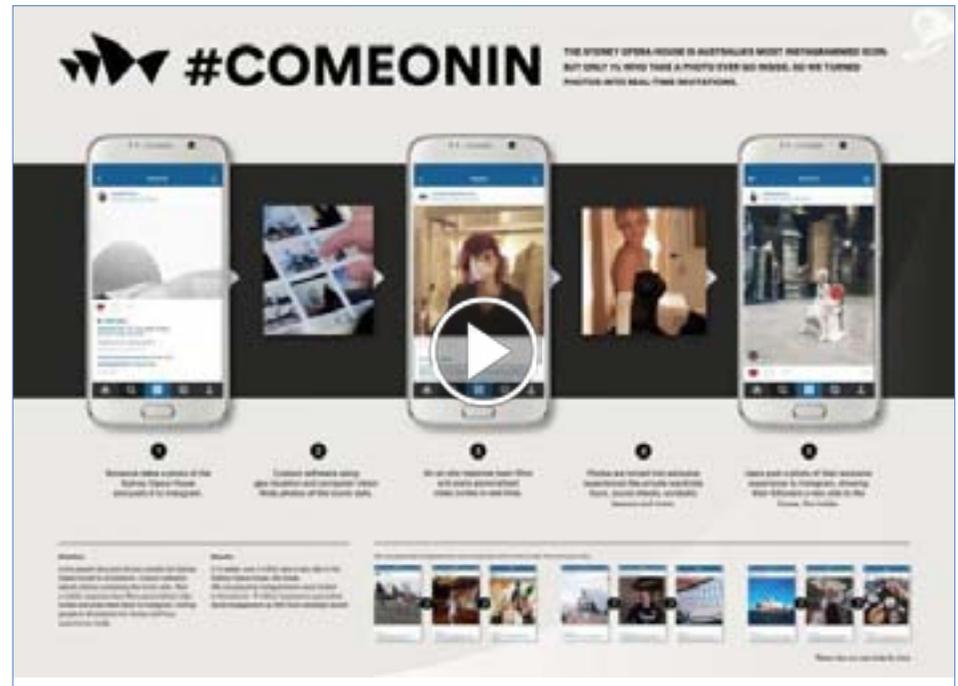
True enough, there was a sense of authenticity about some 2016 Instagram fan-driven sports campaigns like Haagen-Dazs's Wimbledon #LoveYourself, but it was arguably music and culture where we saw the best Instagram work.

Some of the stand-out sponsorship examples were tactically based around Instagram-baiting. Particularly 'scaled-up, size-counts' big and bold bait - such as Guitar Hero's 'Giant Amp' installation at Bestival and Nissan's vast 'Journey Island' experience at Tomorrowland - after all, no one at a festival uses Instagram to say 'I'll meet you at the small marketing display' or 'let's take a selfie by the average sized tent.

But our favourite Instagram initiative of the year was a cultural campaign by a single venue property owner: the Sydney Opera House's Cannes Lions winning #ComeOnIn

The Opera House wanted to leverage its high profile more effectively across all aspects of its business and find a core proposition to drive internal culture and external communications. The resulting #ComeOnIn campaign was based on research saying it was the most Instagrammed thing in Australia with 8.2 million annual visitors most of whom just take an exterior photo and move on rather than ever going inside the building.

To change this trend and get more people inside, #ComeOnIn monitored Opera House related Instagram posts using geo-location and responded to posts at random with a personalised message directed at a specific Instagram user to invite them in for one of a set of lifetime experi-





ences. These ranged from private concerts and behind-the-scenes tours, to fine dining and even costume try-on sessions. Visitors were then encouraged to shoot pictures of their experiences and post them back to Instagram.

In one month, 126 unsuspecting visitors shared their unique Opera House a House on Instagram with the hashtag #ComeOnIn and generated 17 million impressions (2 million social media impressions, 1.8 million influencer impressions, and 13.9 million PR impressions). Meaning more than 5 million people experienced the magic and wonder inside the Sydney Opera House over just four weeks. <

**Facebook Live >**

If sponsorship marketing is about leveraging fan passion, then nothing is as effective as activating when those passions are at their height – live.

Indeed, activating in real-time during an event, in all its various forms, was a key tactic through 2016: from Target’s Gwen Stefanni live video shoot during its Grammys sponsor break and Intel’s on-stage real-time Grammys performance partnership with Gaga, to Emirates repeating its Benfica on-field, pre-match safety demo at the LA Dodgers and Vauxhall’s #GetIn Home Nations footballer supporter surprise FaceTime Fans Calls.

In the music festival field we saw ‘Coachella Unleashed’ by T-Mobile on YouTube Live and Stagecoach ‘Powered by Toyota’ on Yahoo Live, while the NFL built on the live stream strategy it began last year with a game streamed on Yahoo by signing up with Twitter in 2016 for 10 Thursday Night Football games for \$10m – which in turn is selling sponsorship packages with varying degrees of success.

With this season statistics showing a decline in NFL prime time TV ratings, it seems the league’s eagerness to seek new media channels is understandable.

But in the sponsorship space it is argu-

ably Facebook Live – a huge hit with users which grew by 400% through the year - that offered the most opportunities for players, partners and property activation.

That’s partly because statistics showing social media users are 10 times more likely to comment on live videos than regular videos, which also increase user engagement and interest.

The year saw Andy Murray become the first tennis star to stream a major match on Facebook Live (from his own page), while MotoGP earned more than 7 million views from a clip of Andrea Dovizioso and Valentino Rossi pulling epic wheelies and Canterbury launched the new England Rugby kit on Facebook Live too.

But our favourite Facebook Live activation of 2016 saw Team GB sponsor Nissan positioned itself as ‘The Heartbeat Of Britain’ by dragging fans from their beds in the early hours of 10 February to train in real-time alongside Olympic ambassadors Max Whitlock (gymnastics), Kat Copeland (rowing) and Paralympian Richard Whitehead (athletics) under the hashtag #UniteAndExcite. We all did it in the Activative office and we all had to take the afternoon off afterwards. <

**Real-Time In-Game Auctions >**

Whether it’s offering fans a physical memento of the club, stadium, star and sport they love, or whether the focus is on raising funds for causes, 2016 saw a huge uptick in initiatives based around online auctions.

This approach blends real-time game passion with permanent match-relevant physical keepsakes and collectibles.

The NFL’s ‘My Cause My Cleats’ CSR programme lifted restrictions on customised, non-standard football footwear for the Week 13 round of matches to enable all of its players to wear personalised cleats promoting charities close to each of their own hearts and minds. The league, teams, players and sportswear brands all ran pre- and in-game marketing around these individuals cleats, which were all later auctioned off to raise funds for the charities they promote after the games on the league’s own NFL Auction platform.

But initiatives like the NRL’s ‘Instabilia’ project in Australia and NASCAR’s Clio and Cannes winning ‘Hashtag 500’ in the USA actually ran live auctions during the games/races: selling off sports memorabilia that was actually being used at the time of the bidding.

In February, during its flagship Daytona 500 race, NASCAR ran its first ever live social ‘Hashtag 500’ auction: a Twitter race among fans that rewarded winners with memorabilia from the Sprint Cup Series race.

Promoted via a pre-race ‘Ready. Set. Race... for a piece of Daytona’ spot amplified by the property owner, the teams, the drivers, sponsors and fans, this in-race social sell-off saw fans tweet custom hashtags to win race-used memorabilia from Daytona 500 drivers.

The social bidding struggle to win Dale Earnhardt Jr’s race suit generated the most NASCAR-related mentions in one minute (13,000) since the inception of the FMEC, Daytona 500 race day social conversation was up 44% on the 2015 race and was the biggest single day on social since the inception of the NASCAR Fan and Media Engagement Center (FMEC).

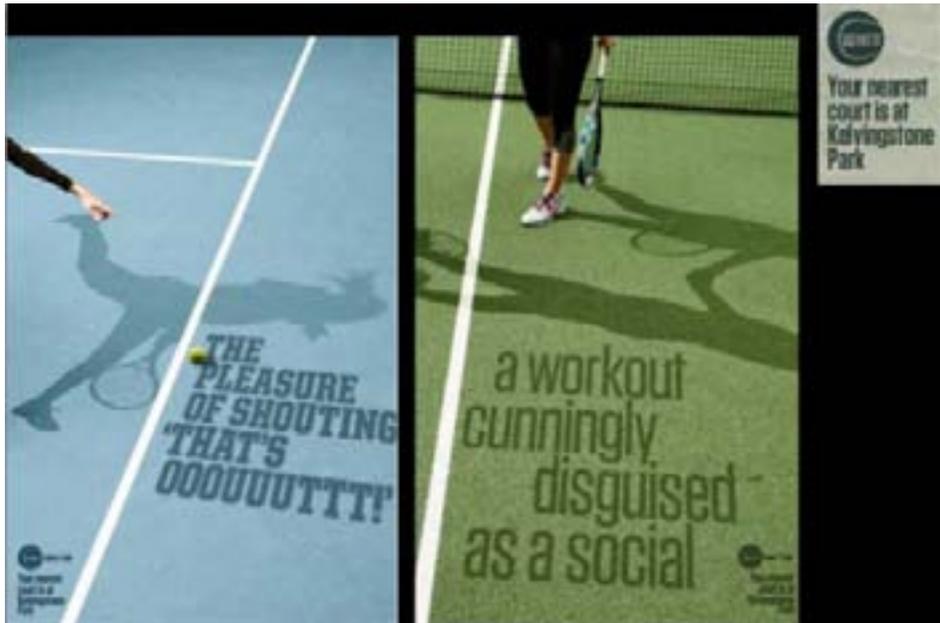
The initiative helped NASCAR double its Twitter following and increase social engagement by 83% year-over-year (with more than 114m total engagements).

This real-time memorabilia (along with the parallel live merchandise partner services) became a genuine trend in the sports sponsorship and property marketing space in 2016

In July, over on the other side of the world in Australia, the National Rugby League ran what it claimed was the world’s first real-time memorabilia auction during its Holden State Of Origin series: a unique initiative offering fans an instant, live, in-game chance to own a piece of tournament memorabilia.

The items - such as headgear, shirts, shorts, posts and kicking tees - are all encased in glass and put up for instant auction were created immediately as game-defining moments occurred on the field were placed on eBay and made available for sale (over a five day period) as the action hap-





pened (with proceeds went to NRL mental health partner 'Lifeline').

Using the tagline 'Own a piece of origin history' and pushed through a promotional film and supporting content across the NRL's social channels, the Instabilia campaign ran live on eBay and auctioned off game items ranging from Johnathan Thurston's signed and game-used head gear, Cameron Smith's game-worn mouth guard, James Maloney's signed kicking tee, Darius Boyd's signed game-worn Jersey, Sam Thaiday's game-worn boots, as well as signed locker room name-plates and the official match ball.

'Instabilia' and 'Hashtag 500' offer opportunities to extend the conversation and enable fans to be part of a re-live the games' biggest moments beyond the final siren and the chequered flag. <

#### Geo-Location & Thermal Activation >

Right person, right time and right place - three of the golden rules of contemporary marketing and campaigns combining geo-location and weather-led activation can affect the latter two immensely.

In marketing, the usefulness and effectiveness of geo-location (essentially the identification of the real-world geographic location of an object of using positioning systems) is immeasurably enhanced by the linking of those coordinates to something that adds property-relevance, motivation and usefulness. One interesting strand to link to using this strategy in the sports area is 'weather'.

The current climate is often so crucial to so many sports: for example, it is relevant to tactics in the professional game and participation in the amateur game.

So linking geo-location technology to climate prediction weather widgets potentially offers plenty of upside and we have begun to see cutting-edge campaign exploring this combination.

Take tennis, for example, where rain delays are the curse of the court: just ask the BBC before the All England Club spent millions on Wimbledon's roof.

In the professional game, players, fans and even property sponsors are sometimes obsessed with the weather. Take the All England Club's long-term (81 years) soft drink sponsor Robinsons' 2016 'Taste Of Wimbledon' campaign for example. The Britvic brand's integrated, multi-phase Wimbledon campaign - which pushed its pocket-sized 'Squash'd' product - included a flagship moving 3D, multi-sensory tennis-themed outdoor installation at London Waterloo Station (complete with replica grass and line-painting machine) that was equipped with thermal digital technology that only activated the installation when the weather was over 21 degrees celsius (perfect tennis weather).

While for amateur participation, people's decisions to play (or not) are often dependent on the local climate - an insight recognised by the UK's Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) and tackled via its 2016, pre-Wimbledon #GoHitIt campaign.

The aim was to build on Britain's 2015 Davis Cup win and get more Brits playing tennis more often by boosting participation. The multi-platform programme not only used both traditional and digital assets to help people find where they could play in their local area, but it also included geo-targeted, weather-based activity to identify which days and times the weather was good for tennis and link this to where the nearest courts were available at those times. <

#### Tech'd-Up Touch Screens >

Companies, particularly customer service led ones, are striving to make self-service easier for customers whenever and wherever they can.

This trend spans in-store, online and social channels, as well as mobile platforms.

As the year drew to a close, Starbucks even launched an artificial intelligence-powered ordering system that enabled its customers to make orders via voice command or messaging interface.

In the sports and entertainment space we are seeing this trend emerging in everything from in-stadium purchasing and utilities to sponsorship activation and sports ambassador led campaigns.

Just one strand of this overarching trend was

to use touch screens to drive personalised self-service.

In fact, touch screens have had something of a renaissance in cutting edge campaigns through 2016.

For example, we liked the Lay's Champions League 'Cheer Of Champions' pan-European campaign which, in addition to on-pack, in-store point-of-sale retail work, plus PR, online and social all pushing a new Cheer range, also saw a digital out-of-home strand that used touch screens to link to social (specifically Snapchat).

The initiative, which aimed to encourage and enable supporters across Europe to show their support for their chosen team, saw an augmented reality, interactive screen (fitted with a custom touch-screen hardware, including facial recognition technology, real-time motion tracking and augmented reality software) placed in a Madrid shopping centre (and mirroring a Snapchat Lense activation strand) to enable passing shoppers to choose a Lay's Cheer flavour, start cheering themselves and create funny, football themed 'Cheer of Champions' selfies for social sharing.

Another of our favourite touch screen initiatives was McDonald's Canada's 'McPlayer - Battle of the Burgers' campaign.

Fronted by Montreal Canadiens stars Alex Galchenyuk and Brendan Gallagher, the initiative sees the two NHL players create their own personalised burgers, make them available for order in restaurants and then invites Quebecers to choose their favourite via new in-store self-order kiosks and across the social space.

This integrated campaign, which spanned traditional advertising, web videos and social phases, included a live link between the in-restaurant touch screen units and a camera video feed to the players enabling hockey star and customer real-time interaction. <

**Proto AI >**

Will the rise of learning systems, robots and AI actually begin to move into the mainstream sports and sponsorship activation landscape?

2016 saw Google's DeepMind beat Lee Se-dol

(a grandmaster at the ancient Chinese board game Go), but whether this is anything more significant than when IBM's Deep Blue beat world chess champion Gary Kasparov back in 1997 remains to be seen.

October also saw debut of the world's first AI autonomous electric racing car - the DevBot - at the Formula E Hong Kong ePrix and plans for a 10 autonomous car Roborace series were revealed as part of future Formula E race weekends. But is this merely experimental entertainment rather than anything more concrete?

Certainly AI and machine learning are starting to appear in the sports analytics field, while so-called connected 'smart sports equipment' is also a new industry buzz term.

Whether it will bridge from the training and analysis area into the live sports arena remains to be seen. Will this be allowed?

Might it even become the next 'drugs style' sports scandal?

The year also saw the slightly stilted launch of Google Home and Amazon Echo and perhaps over the coming months we will see later versions of these devices and their technically more sophisticated successors become significant platforms in 2017?

Indeed, next year we might discover whether these devices are just hands-free, home-helping, smart speaker devices that can respond to users' questions and commands linked to a users pre-programmed set of accounts and apps, or whether they are genuinely proto-AIs and the first step on the road to the future? <





## Products Not Promotions

Developing useful, tangible products to spearhead sponsorship leverage programmes has been one of the year's major strategic trends. We're not talking about activations like Budweiser's Euro 2016 'Made By You' limited edition beer (brewed by fans and aiming to inspire England supporter passion), but about genuinely new and inventive products that have emerged from bright ideas and forward thinking - often emanating from brand/property partnerships. We saw some fine examples in Rio-relevant activation (both in team sponsorships and athlete ambassador relationships), and in the arts/culture space too.



A stand-out example of the latter was Puma's Beatbot – a programmable, app-linked self-driving, line-following training robot (with infra-red sensors, cameras and Led lights) developed by the brand, MIT and JWT, supplied to Puma athletes and promoted by a Usain-Bolt led campaign.

While a top example of a team sponsor sports product from the Paralympics was the Samsung Blind Cap, Developed through its partnership with the Spanish Paralympic team, the Blind Cap claims to be the first swimming cap with a built in vibration system to alert blind swimmers to the exact moment of the end-of-length turn.

The innovation will be implemented by the IPC for the 2020 Paralympic Games.

**ING - 'The Next Rembrandt' >**

Our favourite 2016 product-led sponsorship promotion from 2016 came in the arts and culture space - ING's brilliant 'Next Rembrandt' painting.

Today, data is most frequently associated with targeting the right people, in the right place at the right time. But it can also be a creative tool too.

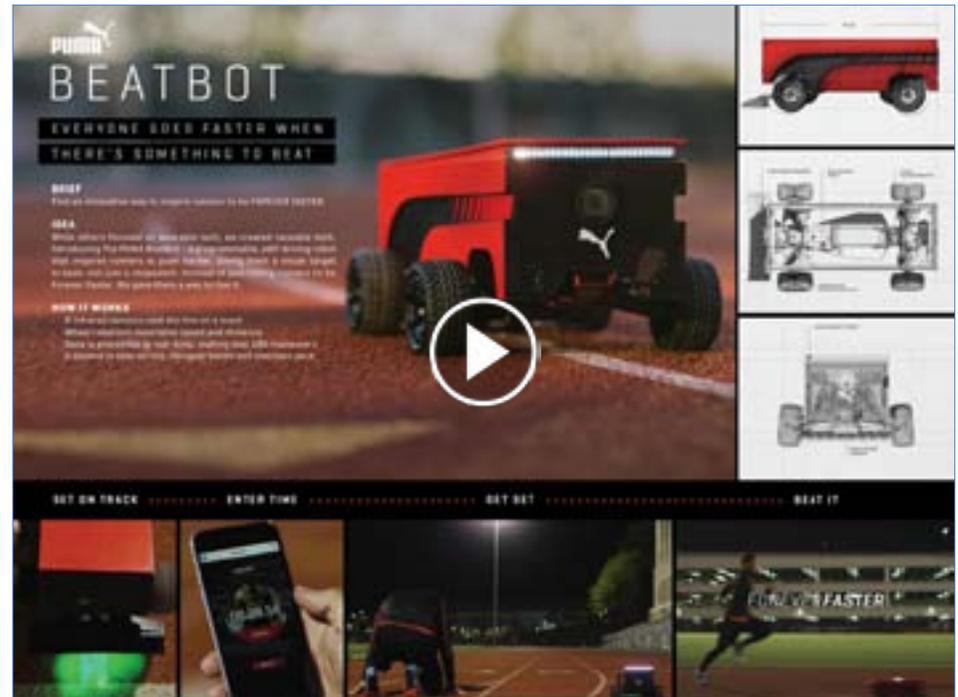
Statistical analysis can be used to create campaigns, experiences, products and even art.

The bank is a big backer of arts and culture in The Netherlands and its properties range from an official partnership with the country's biggest gallery The Rijksmuseum, to having its own exhibition space in Brussels (plus the bank owns 10,000 works of art which it displays across its 55 offices).

Developed with agency JWT Amsterdam (and Microsoft, Delft University of Technology, the Mauritshuis and Museum Het Rembrandthuis), the project blended ING's innovative spirit with its sponsorship of Dutch art by using computing technologies, facial to algorithms and paint mapping and data analysis of all the artists known works to create the first new Rembrandt painting in 347 years.

The Next Rembrandt won a slew of global ad awards - including 16 at Cannes Lions (with a Grand Prix for Creative Data & Cyber).

It generated 1.8 billion media impressions, 1,400 articles and €12.5m in earned media value, while the brand claims as many as 100 million people were part of the 'Next Rembrandt' debate. <



ING PRESENTS  
**THE NEXT  
 REMBRANDT**

BRINGING BACK THE GREAT MASTER  
 TO CREATE ONE MORE PAINTING

How can one of the most forward-thinking banks bring their innovative spirit to their sponsorship of Dutch arts and culture?

We brought back to life Rembrandt, one of the greatest Dutch painters of all time, to create a new painting – 347 years after his death. The painting sparked a global conversation about man vs. machine, and about where innovation can take us.

Together with experts from various fields, over 160,000 fragments from all of Rembrandt's 346 paintings were analysed.

Facial recognition software was designed to understand Rembrandt's style and generate new facial features, which were assembled based on his use of geometrical proportions.

Finally, using a height map to mimic Rembrandt's brushstrokes, the painting was brought to life through an advanced 3D printer that printed 13 layers of paint based ink.

And so, 347 years after his death, a new Rembrandt painting emerged and was unveiled and exhibited in Amsterdam. At [nextrembrandt.com](http://nextrembrandt.com), people could dive deeper into the process of creating the digital painting, and an online launch video helped spark a global conversation about where data and technology can take us.



**01 GATHERING THE DATA**  
 To bring the artist's style of Rembrandt, an extensive database was built and analyzed, pixel by pixel.

**02 DETERMINING THE SUBJECT**  
 Data from Rembrandt's body of work allowed the way to the subject of the new painting.

**03 GENERATING THE FEATURES**  
 A software system was designed to understand Rembrandt's style and generate new features.

**04 BRINGING IT TO LIFE**  
 Once the 3D image was complete, a height map was created to mimic the brushstrokes used by Rembrandt.

**12.5** MILLION EUROS EARNED MEDIA VALUE

**1400+** ARTICLES WRITTEN

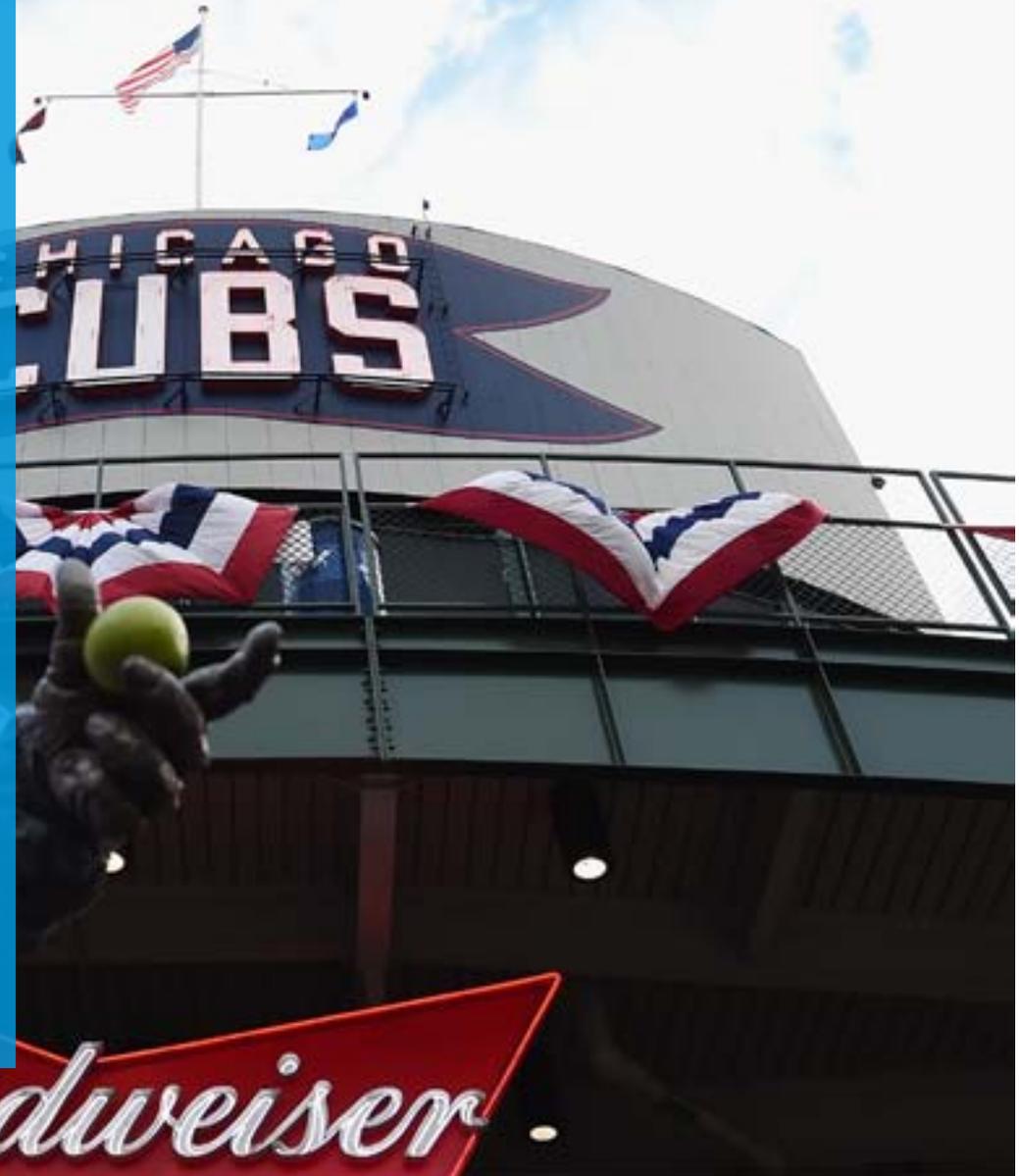
**TRENDING GLOBALLY** ON TWITTER

**1.8 BILLION** MEDIA IMPRESSIONS



## Fan Fairytales

2016 was a year in which the impossible became possible and a few far-fetched, fan fairytales finally came true. These unlikely sports surprises spawned some superb storytelling from sponsors and sportswear brands. What sets sponsorship apart from other forms of marketing is the ability to leverage passion and tell brilliant stories about properties people are genuinely passionate about and 2016 saw some incredible story arcs to activate around. Passionate storytelling engages like nothing else: it attracts attention, has emotional impact and genuinely moves people.



While there were plenty of personal passionate stories at Rio, we felt there were three sports narratives in 2016 that truly stood out from the crowd in terms of sponsor storytelling.

One saw giant slaying Leicester City win the Premier League - something little short of a miracle: in fact, the bookies had odds of 5000/1 at the beginning of the season.

Brands of all kinds, from official club sponsors and ambushers, to city-associated businesses and general football-relevant brands leveraged the team's stunning success.

From rum brand Captain Morgan linking its name to hat of the club captain in an opportunistic, low-latency ad campaign, to kit supplier Puma promoting its association by focusing on the implausible odds the bookies had put on the event, to local Leicester crisp brand Walkers introducing a special, limited edition 'Salt & Victory & Kit Off' flavour and an associated campaign linked to its main brand endorser, former Leicester star player and local lad Gary Lineker's promise to present his Match of the Day show in his pants if his team won the trophy.

While in the USA, the two biggest sports stories were both about ending long losing streaks.

The 2016 NBA Finals offered striking storytelling opportunities: not only because it pitted the game's two best players and biggest stars against one another, but also because sports fans in the city of Cleveland (across all its big league teams) have had to endure nothing but misery and defeat since 1964. Until, of course, the Cavaliers came from behind to upset the record-breaking regular season stars of the Golden State Warriors.

The match-up between star ballers LeBron James and Stef Curry led to some great work.

This ranged from the Under Armour '#Break The Game' campaign (which leveraged fan appetite for short sports clips on social and Curry's stunning three-point skills with a series of 3-second social media spots), to Goodyear's innovative 'Akron Born' initiative (which made the most of the fact both players were born in the tyre brand's home town by giving babies born in the city's hospitals during the NBA Finals its own branded

care packages).

But Cleveland's eventual upset win ensured that our favourite piece of promotional passion from this particular fan fairytale sports story was team and LeBron kit partner Nike's emotional 'Worth the Wait' campaign.

#### Budweiser - 'Harry's Last Call' >

And yet, come November there was one sports story that topped even the end of Cleveland's long wait for sporting triumph - a sports happening that has been described as 'America's last great sports story'.

The Chicago Cubs, the so-called losingest team in baseball, finally ended its 108-year wait and broke the 'Curse of the Billy Goat' by winning the World Series (against Cleveland's MLB team).

Little surprise that such a great sports story in such a big market led to plenty of passionate marketing.

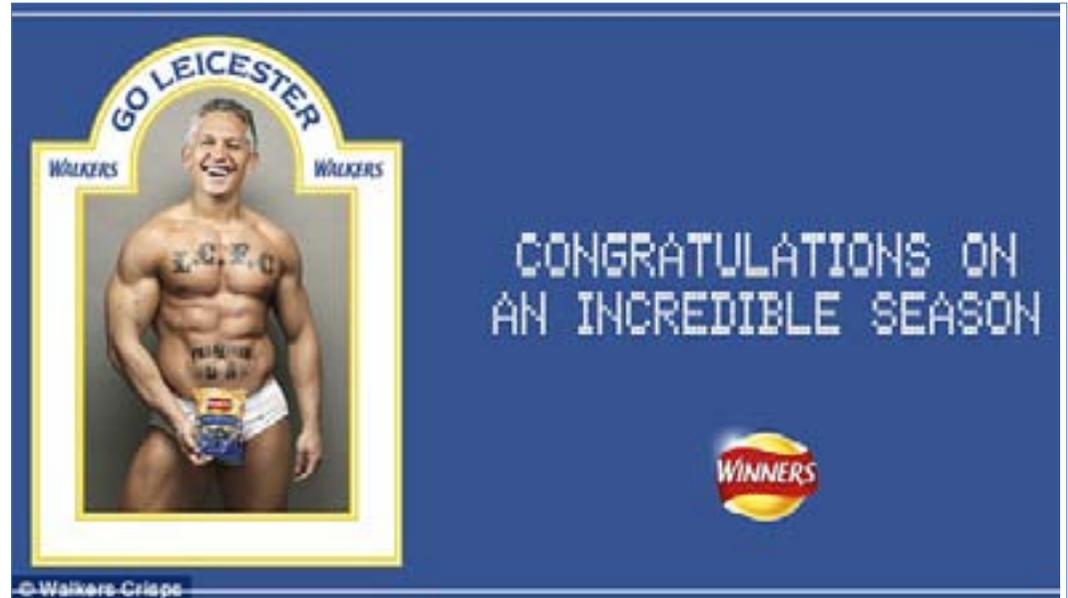
Some of the best work came from Adidas' '#\$@& Curses' and Nike's 'Make Some Day Today', but our favourite activation came from league and club beer partner Budweiser (and agency VaynerMedia) which celebrated the Cubs win with a campaign revolving around city legend, club icon, former in-stadium announcer and game caller Harry Caray who died in 1998.

Immediately after the last out in Game 7, Anheuser-Busch aired its old 1984 'Cubs Fan Bud Man' commercial featuring the late Cubs broadcaster (supported digitally and socially), before turning round and airing a new 'Harry's Last Call' two-minute ad in a few hours: this one used sampled recordings of the sportscaster's voice blended with footage from the evening's action.

Within hours it racked up 3.5m YouTube views and hundreds of thousands of other social media engagements, the commercial spread socially and topped the Campaign Viral Charts.

By engaging through an authentic, fan-loved team icon, Budweiser's approach shows the kind of insider insight and knowledge of club history and fan feelings that marks out the very best sponsorship work.

Fly The W! <







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## Fantastic Film Craft

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We may be in a technology golden age with life-changing new devices and revolutionary communications channels seemingly appearing every few minutes, but there is still a huge role to be played by television and traditional film craft.

Not just because a third of all online activity is actually watching film and that, according to Cisco at least, 80% of all internet traffic will be video by 2019. But also because recent months have seen several big brands, with Coca-Cola at the front of the pack, going on record to state that traditional television still offers them the best marketing return on investment. Little wonder then that 2016 saw some truly fantastic sponsorship filmmaking.



Of course, the ad industry has been honing its skills to create beautifully crafted tv ads since 1941: reaching a mastery of the medium far outweighing the social media skills learned since the first Google search (2000) and Facebook ads (2004).

In 2016 we saw some of the best and the biggest sports marketing and sponsorship films of all time. Many of these were from the usual suspects of course. It is hard not to admire the ad skills of some of Nike's stand-out spots from the last year: including 'The Conductor', 'Babies' and the biggest social spot of Euro 2016 (and possibly of the whole year) in the form of its Cristiano Ronaldo fronted 'The Switch'.

Samsung is a relative newcomer to the blockbuster emotional TV sports-led spot, but the IOC partner proved it is learning film craft fast with two choice Rio 2016 commercials in 'The Chant' and 'The Anthem'.



**Under Armour - 'Rule Yourself: Michael Phelps' >**

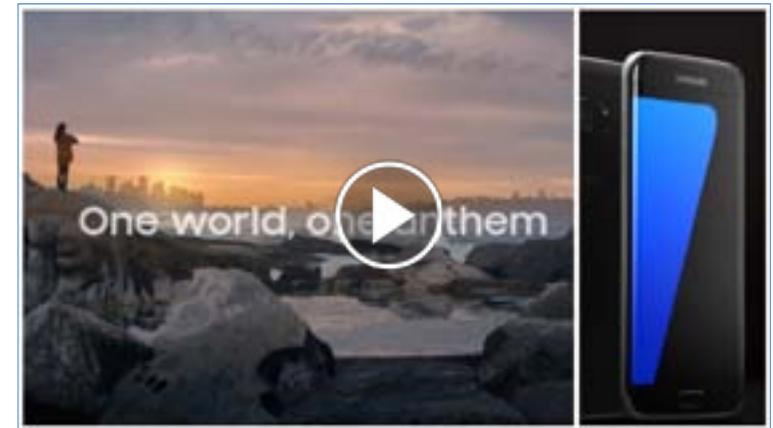
But for us, the best film work of all came from relatively new Nike rival Under Armour: a brand who's 'Rule Yourself' led marketing strategy, creativity and craftsmanship is showing the way not just for sports sponsors but for all marketers.

Its brilliant pre-Olympic spot activating its partnership with 'US Gymnastics' was perhaps only bettered by its Michael Phelps commercial.

On 8 March at the company's headquarters in Baltimore Under Armour first debuted the newest short film from its ongoing 'Rule Yourself' campaign in the form of video focusing on World and Olympic champion swimmer Michael Phelps and his all-consuming training programme.

Built around the core concept of 'J.O.M.O.' (Joy Of Missing Out), the campaign is spearheaded by a flagship 90-second TV commercial that follows the most decorated Olympian in history's brutally tough workouts and recovery sessions to shape his body and performance for the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Summer Olympic Games.

The tagline 'It's What You Do in the Dark That Puts You in the Light' highlights a side of his life not seen in TV interviews or when standing on the podium: it is a story of sacrifice and determination



on his journey towards one last shot at glory and consolidate his lifetime legacy in the sport.

The spot, which is set to The Kills 'The Last Goodbye', was developed agency Droga5.

It fronts a evolving 360-degree global 'Rule Yourself' story, playing out in harness with media partners such as TBS, ESPN, NBC, ABC, Viacom Networks, Turner, Complex, PopSugar, Adult Swim, and Hulu, plus plenty of cinema placement, as well as digital and social assets across Under Armour channels from [www.youtube.com/underarmour](http://www.youtube.com/underarmour) to @UnderArmour and #RuleYourself on Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram and even via downloads of UA RECORD on the brand's fitness community through iTunes and Google Play and more.

The core film is further supported by an online video portraying Phelps and his fiancée watch the new spot for the first time at Under Armour's headquarters - which it seems struck an emotional chord.

'In our eyes, there is no one who can tell the story of what it takes to be successful in training better than Michael Phelps,' outlines Adrienne Lofton, senior vice president, global brand marketing for Under Armour.

'Despite Michael's visibility in the public sphere, it is the work he puts in behind the scenes that truly defines his quest for greatness. By shining a light on those moments in this campaign, we hope to inspire all athletes to push beyond their perceived limitations.'

'Under Armour has been a longtime partner of mine and truly understands the ins and outs of my training,' said Phelps.

'Being a part of this campaign before heading into competitions this summer is an unbelievable honor; it speaks to not only the work that has gone into my career, but also the love for my sport that makes the sacrifices and challenges everyday worth it.'

The initial umbrella 'Rule Yourself' initiative first debuted in August 2015 with an ad starring three big name brand ambassadors - ballerina Misty Copeland, golfer Jordan Speth and baller Steph Curry - multiplying into an athlete army training hard.

The global campaign amplifies Under Armour's vision of training as the focal point of an athlete's everyday life and this original spot closes with the line 'You are the sum of all your training #RuleYourself #IWILL'

While this current evolution strand of the cam-

paign - carrying the tagline 'It's what you do in the dark, that puts you in the light' has already been illustrated with two ads and matching social engagement programmes in 2016 (both rolled out on 23 February): one for UK audiences starring Holland and Manchester United footballer Memphis Depay and the other for the USA that features the USA women's gymnastics team.

All three strands aim to honour the commitment to the 24/7 grind that each athlete pushes through in order to succeed when their moment in the spotlight comes and explore the single-minded training in in-rentless pursuit of sporting greatness.

'This chapter of our Rule Yourself campaign is the natural evolution of Under Armour's training ethos,' adds Lofton.

'As a company built by athletes, we truly understand an athlete's never-ending quest to reach greatness and we want to showcase and honor their sacrifices. By providing this peek behind the curtain of our athlete's lives, we hope to inspire young athletes all over the world to push beyond their perceived limitations in order to achieve their ultimate goals. We truly believe it's what athletes do in the dark, when no one is watching, that ultimately puts them in the spotlight they deserve.'

'When Under Armour brought the Rule Yourself concept forward, it really spoke to who our athletes are and the drive it takes to be the best,' chips in USA Gymnastics President Steve Penny.

'Our gymnasts dedicate the majority of every day to training and school, often beginning before everyone wakes up and after everyone has gone to bed, all to be the best they possibly can be. This commitment is demonstrated day in and day out for years, with the ultimate goal of achieving perfection, and that attitude and determination are what Under Armour understands better than anyone else.'

In addition to scooping the Film Craft Grand Prix at Cannes Lions 2016 (the ultimate ad award) Under Armour's Michael Phelps film is one of the most shared Olympics spots of all time.

According to Droga5 strategy co-head Harry Roman, the spot is shareable because it conveys sacrifice.

'I think people connect with this film because it paints hard work and sacrifice with beautiful strokes, but does so in a way that is raw and real about what it

takes to win. I would like to think that this film and the stirring lyrics, 'It's The Last Goodbye,' are playing in the back of people's minds when they see him smiling on the podium. We probably won't ever see another athlete like Michael Phelps for a very long time,' he argues.

Part of Under Armour's Olympic success was down to it understanding and leveraging the new (so-called) IOC Rule 40 - which brought an end to the long-established rights holder and host nation legislated in-games marketing blackout for companies that sponsor athletes but not the event itself.

Brands can benefit from paying lower fees for athlete ambassador deals rather than official event rights, thus potentially enabling them to spend more on strategy, the creative and the media.

So, while the ad initially launched back in March (it notched up an impressive 764,428 YouTube views in its first 24 hours) this approach seems to be succeeding., Under Armour was able to tweet a link to the spot (with its #RuleYourself hashtag, an American flag and an applause emoji) seconds after Phelps won his record-breaking 20th Olympic gold medal.

Data from social video data outfit Unruly suggests that spot is the second most shared Olympics ad through 2016 (behind UK Paralympic broadcaster's 'We're The Superhumans' - see case study - which currently ranks as the fifth most shared Olympics ad ever).

So why, according to the data, was it so shareable?

The film strikes an emotional chord - particularly with its millennial (18 to 34-year-old) male target audience - through the happiness and surprise of the narrative and the visual storytelling sense of drama (and the emotive track by The Kills).

According to Unruly, the film 'elicited a sense of inspiration' among 47% of total viewers and 68% of millennial men, while 22% reported 'a feeling amazement'.

'Something we've learned from all of the ads we tested if we look at different demographics and the emotions that are most resonant to them, for millennials - especially male millennials - inspiration is one of the top emotions. If that is present at all in an ad, they tend to experience it,' explains Unruly marketing and insight VP Devra Prywes.

Unruly stats show that 56% of the spots' shares thus far have come from Facebook and 28% from Twitter. <



**RULE YOURSELF**



## Linking Leagues To Fans

It's always a tough partnership proposition and campaign challenge: how do sponsors of leagues use their assets to engage all the fans - despite the deep-seated rivalry (often enmity) between many tribal club supporters? This is a puzzle most sponsorship marketers have already faced and one that more mainstream marketers will now ponder as they decide how to respond to 2016's divisive and contentious politics that has seen diametrically opposed segments face off against one another. Can all brands learn from sports sponsors who are experienced at simultaneously marketing to rival sets of opposing fans?



YOU'VE  
GOTTA  
HAVE A  
TEAM



2016 saw some imaginative and innovative solutions to this classic sponsorship challenge.

Traditionally there are two starting points from where to try and solve this puzzle: sponsors of a team who want to use the tie-in to engage fans right across the league and sponsors of a league who want to try and build relationships with individual team fan bases.

One imaginative approach to the former saw Southampton FC sponsor Virgin Media subsidise away fan ticket prices to games at St Marys. The media business worked with the club and the Footballer Supporters' Federation to ensure visiting fans to all 19 of Southampton FC's home games received a £10 ticket subsidy in an envelope at the stadium (presumably, much of which was then actually spent on food and drink in the stadium – thus ensuring much of the money channelled back into the coffers of the club that Virgin Media actually sponsors).

While another notable solution starting from the latter partnership position was NCAA sponsor Nissan's excellent 'Die Hard Fan' app: a personalisable facial mapping app.

The auto brand's ground-breaking, new four-year NCAA partnership involved tie-ups with more than 100 college sports programmes (totalling 190 million fans) and to leverage all the supporter groups together through a single campaign Nissan developed a digital face painting, app-based, shareable social strand to its Diehard Fan initiative.

This augmented reality tool uses inventive facial recognition and mapping technologies to enhance the fan tradition of face painting in team colours with by creating an immersive and shareable digital experience.

The initiative offered more than a 1000 ways to personalise your game face and saw 35 million designs tried on by users. The app went to Number one in the app store and the average time spent in app was more than 10 minutes. Overall, the campaign generated more than 100 million impressions.

**Football Federation Australia - 'You Gotta Have A Team' >**

Perhaps our favourite league-wide and all-team specific campaign in 2016 was the Football Federation Australia's multi-club, multi-channel 'You Gotta Have A Team'.

Launched as the new Hyundai A-League season prepared to get under way, it aimed to both promote the new A-League season on television and social media networks and to turn the nation's young football fans into supporters of specific domestic teams.

The FFA's approach is based on a series of Australian football fan insights following some close season research into the state of the game.

Whilst existing A-League fans are passionate in their support, interest in the sport of football across Australia doesn't always link to A-League club support. The governing body's research shows that 42% of kids under 15's who are registered football players don't actually have an A-League side affiliation.

Indeed, of the 2.18 million Australian football fans, only 55% support a domestic Australian club.

The other 45% may play the game, passionately support Barcelona, Bayern Munich or Manchester United and spend plenty of time on EA Sports' FIFA series, but aren't fans of any Australian sides.

That's 981,000 potential new, young football loving fans (plus their families) for the country's 10 top tier domestic teams: a major demographic opportunity for the sport.

The research also suggested that even fathers who were categorised as committed rugby or cricket fans would be happy to get involved in the A-League if that was what their children wanted.

The campaign itself is thus fronted by 10-year-old Yoshi: a central character and an everyman illustration of the opportunity Australia's pro league has to turn young football fans into fervent domestic club supporters.

The campaign's background narrative explains that, after playing in a spring football competition last year, Yoshi is now immersing himself in domestic football and is searching for a Hyundai A-League team to support and commit to.

So the integrated new season initiative sees

not just the FFA, but all 10 A League clubs go head-to-head to vie for Yoshi's support.

Amplified by the league and all its clubs across multiple platforms and via an expansive set of general league-wide and club-specific content pieces, Yoshi travels 15,000km across Australia, meeting the national team coach, as well as all the captains and star players of the 10 A-League teams.

He high fives more than 90 players, takes more than 1600 photos (including 20 selfies with Aussie football icon Tim Cahill) and visited each club, is shown around their stadiums and facilities, learns goal celebrations and gives them all the opportunity to gain his support and to persuade him that their team is the right one for him.

This campaign ran across television, cinema, radio, digital, in-stadium signage, events, experiences and its spanned more than 100 pieces of video content released largely on social media.

Football fans everywhere could follow Yoshi's journey via the campaign digital hub at <http://www.a-league.com.au/youve-gotta-have-a-team>.

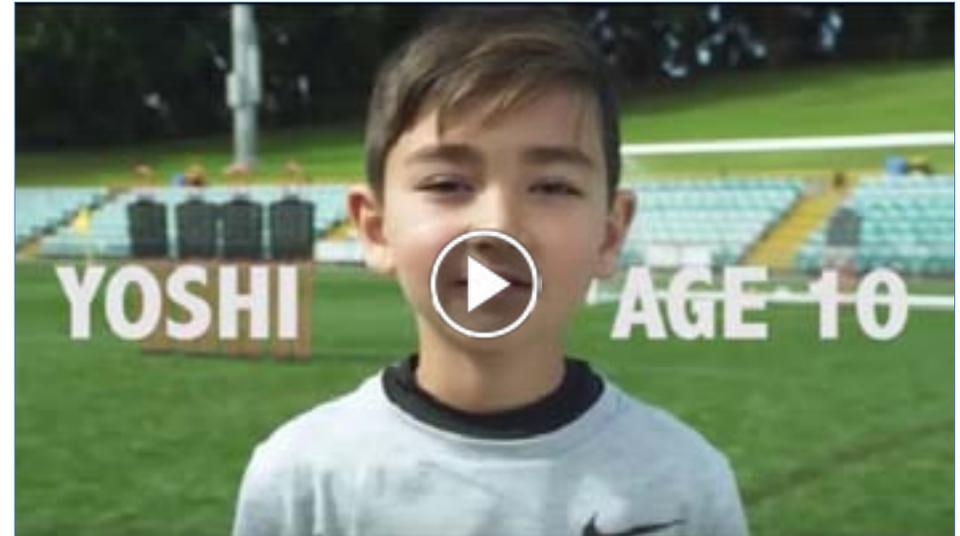
And supporters were also encouraged to lobby for Yoshi's to become a fan of their team across the social space using the hashtag, #ALeague.

Individual clips were shot with all 10 clubs as they campaign for Yoshi's support : these were amplified on league and club-specific channels.

Yoshi based his choice on four factors that were most important to him:

1. Family: Are the clubs welcoming to a family crowd and inclusive for all ages? Being a 10 year old himself he is seeking a club that encourages the younger fans?
2. Team: Do clubs have strong, friendly players with personality Yoshi could relate to and admire?
3. Performance/Play: Do the team perform well together, make chances and deliver an exciting experience. Whilst Yoshi knows that with his decision he is in for the long haul and some seasons his chosen club will perform better than others, he wants a dynamic club that push themselves to create opportunities on the pitch.
4. Fans: Do the clubs have a proud fan base, will Yoshi be in good company?

The campaign's climax saw Yoshi eventually





announce his decision on national breakfast television, while big name A-League stars like Cahill offered their own opinions on social media as the days counted down to his final choice.

Who did he choose? Melbourne City!

'Making the final decision was a lot harder than I had ever imagined,' said Yoshi.

'I had such a fantastic time with each of the clubs. However, I knew Melbourne City was a club I wanted to support when, at the end of the day's filming, Tim Cahill told me that whatever club I picked I'd be welcome back to see them anytime as their guest. The fact that they would be supportive of me, whatever choice I made, I thought was really cool. It was this club's spirit and attitude that really appealed to me the most.'

'Our challenge is to unite the two million people who have expressed their passion for football as a player, coach, referee, parent, son, daughter, supporter, administrator or fan and engrain them into the Hyundai A-League so they can enjoy the atmosphere that can only be felt in the stadium on match day', explains FFA CEO David Gallop.

'We wanted to showcase the clubs' attributes to help build a strong, loyal community following. Our goal with this initiative is to give people who've yet to select their team the chance to get a better understanding of what each team represents and their culture so they can make an informed decision. Because to truly feel everything football has to offer ... you've gotta have a team!'

The campaign saw Football Federation Australia's head of marketing, digital and fan engagement: Rob Squillaciotti (and an FFAS team including senior marketing manager Jessica Laycock, general manager, media and communications David Mason, fan engagement manager Vanessa Bolzan, digital marketing manager Joy Yeo and digital content executive Alen Delic) work in harness with creative agency BMF.

The BMF team included executive creative director Cam Blackley, art director Harry Neville-Towle, copywriter James Sexton, designer Dan Pritchard, client services director Dan Lacaze, account director Will Woods, account manager Si-ena Shuttler, executive planning director Christina

Aventi, planner Sarah Hood, head of TV Jenny Lee-Archer, directors Brad Goosen, James Sexton, Harry Neville-Towle, senior producer Brad Goosen, content production manager Brooke Mather and editors Brad Goosen, Adam Khamis, Nick Gulliver, Luke McCauley, Josh Searle and Kelly Searancke.

The A-League is certainly in a very competitive sports marketplace, after all, Australians are known worldwide to be as passionate (and competitive) about sport as any nation on earth.

Despite this, the research shows plenty of space to grow and that the market is far from being sports saturated.

Cleverly, the FFA (the A-League's owner) knew it was due to negotiate a new media rights deal so the timing of the campaign certainly makes a lot of commercial sense.

This season is crucial to the success of the FFAs stated objective of doubling its \$160m (€151m), four-year deal.

And the campaign metrics look positive. Six rounds into the new season and TV ratings were up 30% on the previous year. Attendances have also risen by 12%, while club memberships is up 6%. In total there have been 108,000 new members signed up since the campaign kicked off.

The campaign itself reached 12.5m Australians across TV, cinema, print, radio and outdoor and it generated 80 million (paid and owned) impressions between 3 October and 6 November. The FFA's Twitter account activity has increased seven-fold after the campaign's launch.

Another mark of success is that the campaign even saw fans launch parody Yoshi accounts.

Some clubs even tried to find their own existing fans called 'Yoshi'.

This campaign demonstrates a clever strategic response to a well researched opportunity: the initiative told a story with a complete beginning-to-end narrative, while its solid creative and media engaged the right youth/family target audience.

Overall it has a sense of genuine authenticity

In our opinion, it is not just the A-League's best campaign, or even one of Australian sport's best initiatives, this is a world class campaign in every sense. <





## Aggregating Activation

Composite campaigns - singular leverage initiatives that combine more than one property from a brand's sponsorship portfolio - was a big 2016 trend. By blending together multiple properties and rights, brands can maximise efficiency and cost effectiveness - no wonder it is an increasingly popular sponsor strategy being employed right across the partnership landscape. This route can potentially multiply star pulling power, propagate publicity and combine audience reach by using multiple sets of assets and then amplifying them across several different spaces and platforms in a single campaign.



Some of the best examples of the strategy showed up in the UK in 2016.

Team GB sponsor Samsung, for example, seamlessly dovetailed its Olympic and Paralympic team sponsorships into a 'School Of Rio' campaign that itself originally emerged from its England Rugby by Football Union partnership in late 2015.

While auto brand Vauxhall neatly dovetails its UK four national team Home Nations football sponsorships in campaigns such as #GetIn and also in Britain Red Bull linked its new partnership with Bath RFU to its Formula 1 team in a stunt that saw the rugby union team's scrum and one of its F1 race cars in a power pushing promotion.

Elsewhere around the world we saw Heineken merge its new F1 partnership with its long running UEFA Champions League sponsorship at the GP Heineken D'Italia 2016 with an 'F1 All Stars v 'Football Legends' charity five-a-side match in the Monza pit straight to raise funds for the Italian earthquake relief programme.

While the NHL run a 'Two Places' campaign, led by TV work in the USA and Canada, that celebrated the idea that a person actually has two teams and two sets of fans they are loyal to (club and country) to leverage both the 'World Cup of Hockey' and the upcoming new NHL season.

This trend spans blockbuster properties (like Pepsi linking its NFL rights with its megastar music partnerships at the Super Bowl) to aggregating smaller sports sponsorships to combine reach.

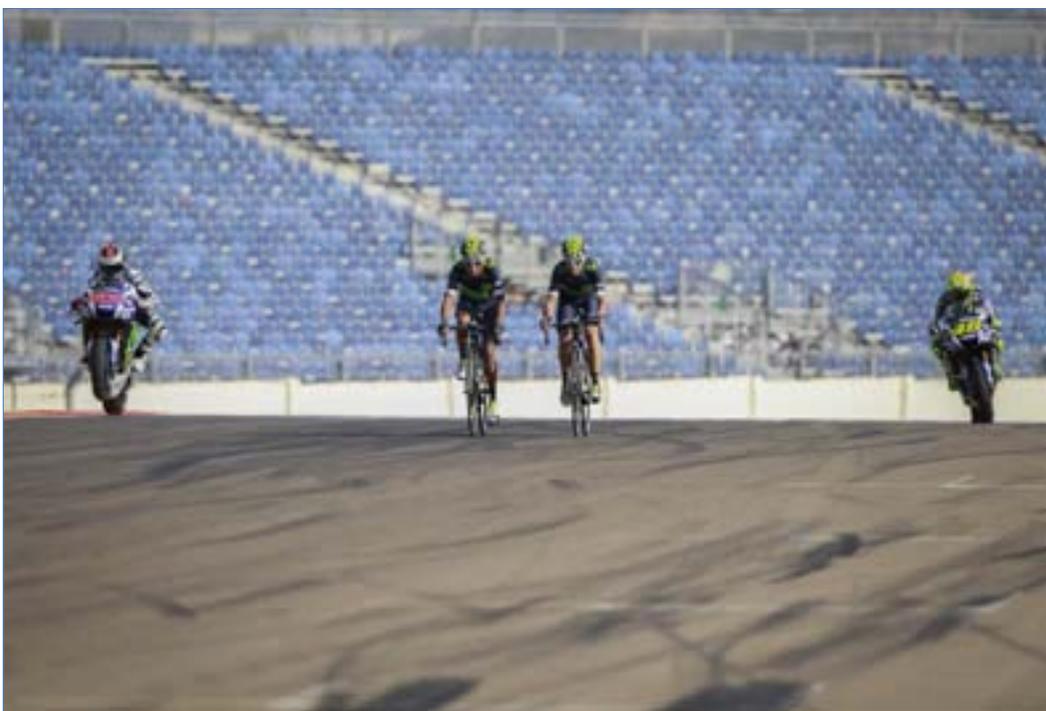
**Movistar - 'MotoGP & Pro Cycling' >**

One of our favourite examples of this latter approach to property blending was the linked campaign from Spanish telco Movistar tying-in both its pro-cycling and MotoGP teams and stars.

This clever two-minute clip saw Movistar coral a posse of its partner property riders together for a campaign blending its backing of Pro-Cycling and MotoGP teams (and a venue title sponsorship too).

The Spanish telco initiative brings together four of the world's best riders – cyclists Nairo Quintana and Alejandro Valverde, plus motorbike legends Jorge Lorenzo and Valentino Rossi – for a campaign that aims to develop synergies between





the brand and its Movistar Pro Cycling and Movistar Yamaha MotoGP teams.

In addition to leveraging shared brand/property/athlete synergies, another aim of the campaign was to celebrate the extension of the brand's three-year contract extension (to 2019) with both Quintana as a brand ambassador and with the whole cycling team.

In September, following his Tour of Spain victory and before the start of the Gran Premio Movistar de Aragón, Movistar brought Quintana together with team-mate Valverde and former MotoGP champions Rossi and Lorenzo at the Motorland race circuit (near Zaragoza).

Movistar also holds the naming rights to the Grand Prix at the circuit ensuring that the creative developed for the campaign included the brand logo spread across the background landscape.

The campaign was led by a spearhead two-minute spot posted on the cycling team's digital and social sites and the MotoGP team's channels too.

The filming and photography, which featured drone cameras and striking scenery spanning skylines and mountain ranges, resulted in a warm-hearted core campaign video in which the four riders meet, socialise, share expertise and ride the track.

A humorous pit-stop sequence sees Yamaha mechanics perplexed by the Canyon road bikes, while the serenity and sweat of the bike riders is shattered as the Yamahas hurtle by.

The central piece was supported by a 'Making Of' video and digital and social content too amplified by the teams, the series property owners and the athletes themselves.

Most of the assets carry the tagline: 'elige todo' ('choose everything') - a Movistar triple-play (broadband, telephone and TV) bundle package.

Of course the logistics and timing behind blending properties can certainly be tricky: as shown by the narrow window Movistar had to work in to produce this campaign.

In fact, Movistar say that the idea first emerged when the window of opportunity was identified a full 12 months before the shoot.

The double property approach enabled Movistar to promote, spread and share the content across multiple platforms and leverage multiple events: these included not only Movistar's own platforms such as Movistar and Movistar Plus, but also the Movistar Yamaha GP and the Movistar Team's channels, as well as property owner MotoGP itself.

For example, MotoGP itself used the video globally to promote its next race and the expanded exposure enabled Movistar to achieve results it describes as 'more international than anything else' it had ever produced (particularly across South America).

On Facebook alone, the campaign's six posts have racked up more than one million views and 20,000 shares on Facebook alone with just six posts, while eight individual tweets generated a further 11,200 Twitter views and 1,200 retweets and a cut-down one-minute version of the film notched up 25,000 times on Instagram (and 179,000 likes).

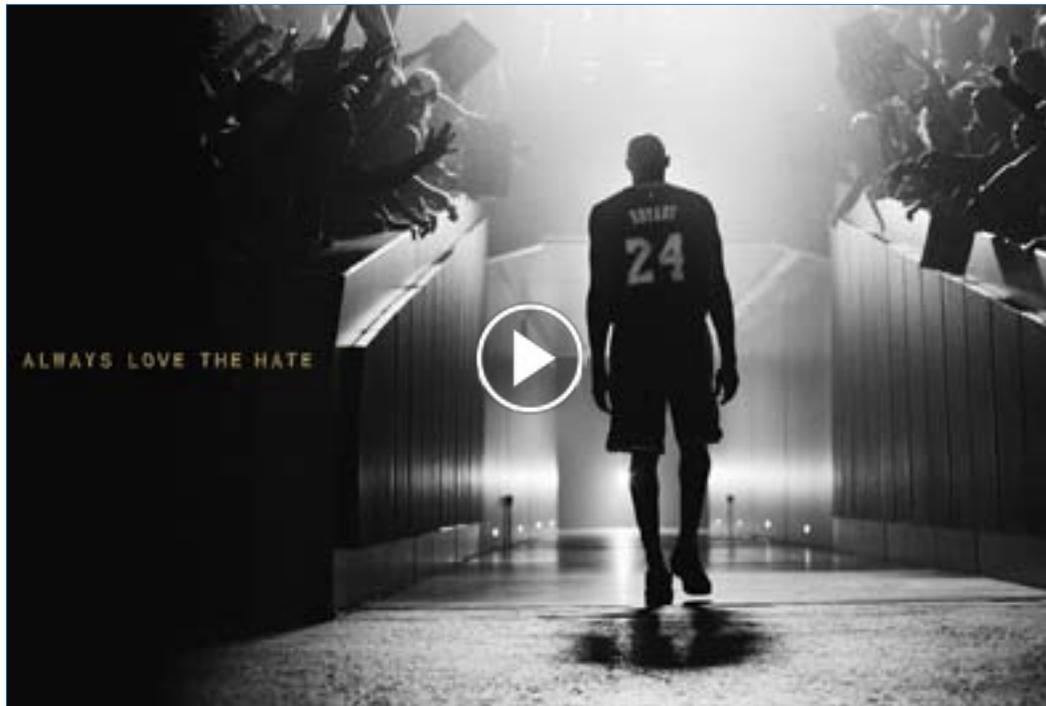
On the Movistar Pro Cycling team's YouTube channel the film was watched 22,000 times (not bad for cycling) and on the MotoGP team's YouTube channel it added a further 20,000 views. <



## Brand-Owned Events

Just as 'owned media' can offer company marketers control and value, 'brand-owned events' can do likewise - with the added potential benefits of offering new revenue streams and increasing the company value. Little wonder then that the 'brand-owned' trend continues to grow. Some recent stand-out examples include 2014's outstanding Honda 'Sound Of Senna' and 2015's inventive Japan Sports Council's 'Reviving Legends'. This trend now covers a vast array of approaches: stretching from REI's brilliant 2015 Black Friday #OptOutside idea (which it tweaked in 2016), to brand-owned experiential spaces like Glades' 'Museum of Feelings'.





Nike, as ever, is at the forefront of this trend and will remain so through 2017 with events such as its brand-owned 'Breaking 2' (<http://news.nike.com/news/2-hour-marathon>) assault on the two hour marathon barrier.

The company itself is backing, supporting, training and organising three top runners to make history (Eliud Kipchoge of Kenya, Lelisa Desisa of Ethiopia, and Zersenay Tadese of Eritre) by running a sub-two-hour marathon sometime in the spring.

#### Nike - '#MambaDay' >

One of the more interesting attempts by a brand campaign to repurpose an existing event so that it becomes a brand-owned phenomena in 2016 was another Nike initiative - a marketing campaign marking NBA legend Kobe Bryant's retirement called #MambaDay.

To leverage the retirement of one of its biggest ever superstar brand ambassadors, Nike Basketball rolled out a multi-platform, multi-market campaign revolving around the theme of love/hate to mark Kobe Bryant's final game called #MambaDay.

This #MambaDay (13 April) marketing tribute aims to illustrate how hate has manifested into respect and admiration for Bryant.

Aiming to raise awareness of the LA Lakers' star's last game with a blended brand/fan tribute 'Always Love The Hate' initiative and the campaign's various strands - which spanned ad executions, interactive mechanics and Nike products - circled around a Nike Basketball bespoke web hub at [www.nike.com/mambaday](http://www.nike.com/mambaday).

The assets ranged from a simple included a digital poster, to an interactive, fan-created #MambaDay generator enabling fans to create their own final Bryant career comment overlaid on a powerful player photo which could then be shared across supporters' own social media.

Also, in the product silo, for a limited time period beginning at tipoff of Bryant's final game, fans could customise and purchase a limited edition Kobe 11 Mamba Day NikeiD shoe to celebrate Bryant's career by featuring graphics highlighting

eight notable career statistics.

The initiative also came complete with an accompanying #MambaDay limited Nike clothing range.

The campaign was led by a set of classic ad assets led by a spearhead US commercial called 'The Conductor' - which sees the retiring 37-year-old conduct an orchestra of players, coaches and rowdy fans in a 'symphony of jeers and cheers' (echoing the player's polarising effect throughout his career).

The 'extras' in the spot include both Kobe lovers and haters and also include other celebrities linked to Bryant's career and Nike stars from coach Phil Jackson, to players like Paul Pierce and Rasheed Wallace and even Chicago mascot Benny the Bull.

The spot, created by Wieden + Kennedy Portland and directed by Mark Romanek, follows a previous Nike Bryant tribute ad released a few days earlier and featuring a string of Nike athlete ambassador tributes (and which saw Nike athletes across multiple sports wearing black and gold shoes as a symbolic tribute to Bryant's golden career).

Nike athletes celebrating Kobe in the spot launched in the lead up to #MambaDay include Kyrie Irving, Russell Wilson, Allyson Felix, Elena Delle Donne, Odell Beckham Jr, Paul George, Rafael Nadal, Paul Rodriguez, Natalie Anchonwa, Kirani James, Michelle Wie, Richard Sherman, LeBron James, Neymar Jr, Serena Williams, Roger Federer, Phil Jackson, Sanya Richards-Ross, Tiger Woods, Clay Mathews, NaVorro Bowman, Brooks Koepka, Kevin Durant, Rob Gronkowski, Ali Krieger, Rory McIlroy, Gerard Pique, Eric Koston, Shao Ting, Javier Mascherano, Yi Jianlian, Andres Iniesta, Marcus Mariota and Mo Farah.

A side strand of the campaign in China (where Bryant is hugely popular) saw Nike and Wieden + Kennedy Shanghai roll out a different Love/Hate farewell commercial called #Don't Love Me, Hate Me'.

'Kobe has an intimate relationship with the Chinese ballers, so he knows exactly how to teach and motivate them,' explains Terence Leong, cre-

ative director of W+K Shanghai.

'Together with Nike China and Kobe, our team crafted the script and made sure the film was just as provocative as the man himself. It was an intense and uncompromising process because Kobe was just as demanding on the creative team as he was on the Lakers.'

W+K creative director Azsa West adds: "[Kobe] chose to focus on becoming a legend rather than being a hero. When it comes to winning, Kobe is willing to push himself to risk everything. Because standing back and doing nothing, that's real failure. This philosophy is very Nike 'Just do it,' and Kobe is the perfect person to deliver this spirit of Nike.'

The umbrella campaign was further supported with plenty of social content - particularly in the lead up to and during the final game itself and ended with the simple post that generated 40,000 Likes and 40,000 Retweets.

A further product based campaign launched the day after #the last game #MambaDay revealed Kobe's post retirement next chapter with Nike Muse Pack (which fuses innovation with deeper inspirational stories while furthering Kobe's journey with Nike) initiative.

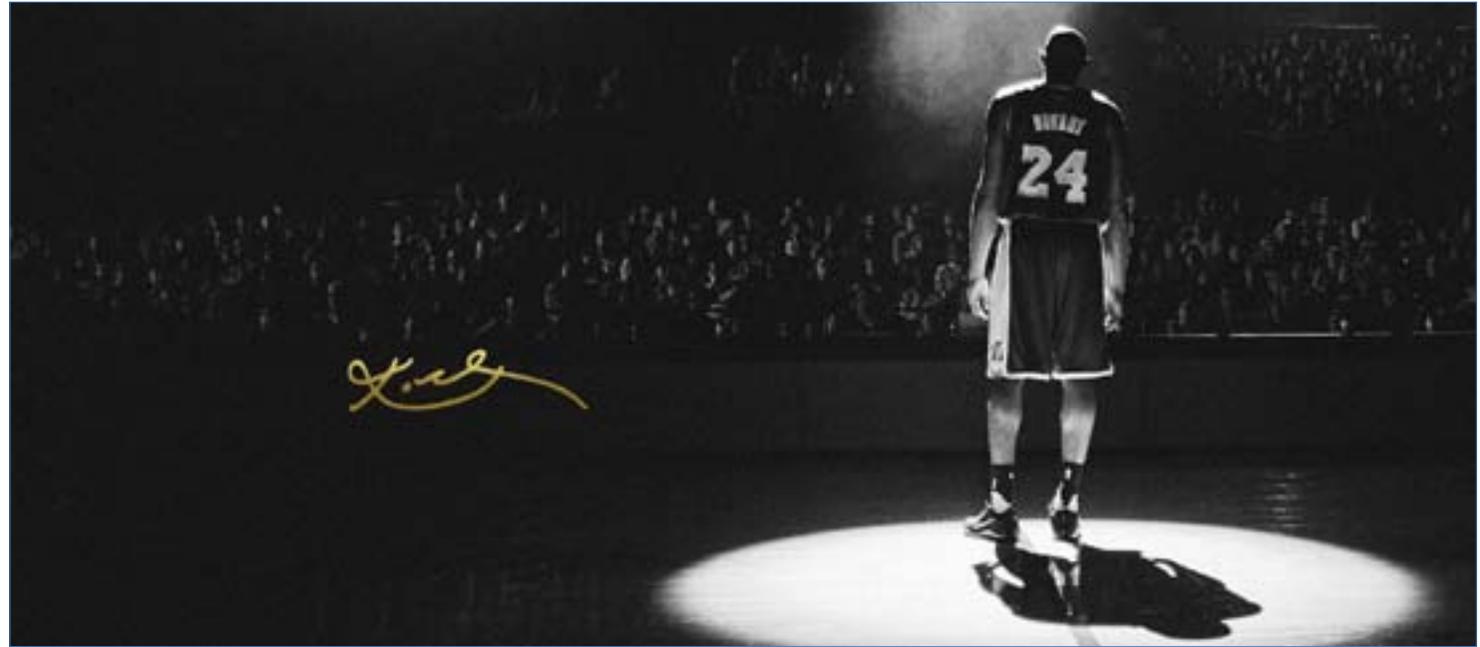
Sponsors and advertisers of all kinds have been bidding farewell to Kobe Bryant through his final season with both comic and dramatic executions and Nike tries to balance both approaches.

Which isn't a simple proposition by any means!

But the sportswear giant pulls it off - just.

For example, The Conductor commercial has an offbeat, funny theatricality (not entirely unlike W+K's Old Spice creative approach) and yet it is not a straight parody, but rather an ad that 'illustrates how hate has manifested into respect and admiration for Bryant' (at least that's what Nike says).

With more than six million YouTube views in its first four days, this idea of exploring Bryant's status as basketball's greatest hero or villain has certainly generated plenty of interest. <







## Mini-Me Marketing Mania

One of the year's mini marketing trends was, well, campaigns built around 'mini me' versions of sponsored sports stars. Some may feel the tactic is a touch obvious, others that it is too cutesy and clichéd to be genuinely creative. Some feel it smacks a little of lazy 80s look-a-like television formats. Nevertheless, 2016 saw the return of 'mini me' marketing mania. Cute kids and young look-a-likes were littered right across the sports marketing and sponsor campaign landscape during the last 12 months. It's not a trend or an approach that we at Activate would necessarily choose to champion, but we have to confess to having a few fun favourites.



We are enjoying the European Tour's comic 'Little Interviews' series and we also liked Sky Pro-Cycling's Tour de France 'Mini Team Sky' look-a-like campaign.

### NAB - 'AFL Mini Legends' >

But Activative's favourite Mini-Me initiative of 2016 was probably NAB's 'AFL Mini Legends'.

Created by agency Clemenger BBDO Melbourne and launched in August, the campaign aims to celebrate the bank's support of footy and spans TV, online films and digital games and it is built around 18 young footie players (in the brand's 'Auskickers' programme) each bearing an uncanny likeness to a well-known AFL player.

Led by a TV commercial that aims to demonstrate NAB's commitment not just in sponsoring the AFL and the elite game, but also to grow the game and support it at youth level.

The core commercial is supported by individual films focusing on individual stars and their mini me – such as Mini Caleb Daniel (being given a VIP tour of the Kennel by her favourite player).

In addition to the Mini Legends commercial and films, there is also a supporting 'Guess The Mini Legends' game.

Celebrating the climax of the Australian football season, AFL sponsor National Australia Bank (NAB) also extended the campaign by partnering with Snapchat on a bespoke lens enabling users to become 'Mini-Legends' for the 2016 Toyota AFL Grand Final.

This innovative Snapchat Lens enables fans to turn themselves into one of the AFL stars from both teams playing in this year's Grand Final – either the Western Bulldogs' Caleb Daniel or the Sydney Swans' Lance Franklin.

The lens runs on Grand Final Day itself only and to get involved fans simply need to download Snapchat and find the NAB Mini Legends Snapchat lens.

'We're really excited to extend our Mini Legends campaign through Snapchat on one of the biggest days of the year,' says NAB chief marketing officer Andrew Knott.

'We hope fans across the country get in-

involved and have some fun with it.'

'When we were little, we all dreamed of one day being football superstars,' adds Clemenger BBDO creative director Rich Williams.

'This Grand Final Day, NAB and Snapchat are giving people the chance to really live their football dream.'

This added a new dimension to an already successful activation that has seen the spearhead spot rack up a solid 284,526 YouTube views.

NAB has been a sponsor of the AFL since 2002 – from the elite game to amateur and youth football.

It's core approach to the property is a commitment to 'grow the game' – whether commenting on the biggest match of the year in 10 languages or encouraging fans to #fanshake.

NAB also backs the AFL's 'Auskick' programme since 2006.

Each year providing over 170,000 young kids across the country with the opportunity to learn and develop fundamental footy skills with the supporting objective of promoting healthy kids lifestyle, and ensuring the 'footy champions of tomorrow' can realise their potential.

The NAB also supports the AFL's 'Rising Stars Program': backing the league's key talent identification and development pathway that operates from the grassroots through elite level.

It is also the title sponsor of 'The NAB Challenge' – which aims to bring footy back to its roots and give fans the chance to see how their team is shaping up for the season ahead and for some, it's a rare chance to enjoy live AFL action in their own backyard while a further strand of its footie activity is the 'NAB AFL Trade Period'. <







## Sharing Economy Sponsorship

The so-called 'sharing economy' is a much used and much abused umbrella phrase: particularly in contemporary marketing circles. Initially it was coined to describe the emerging socio-economic ecosystems built around the peer-to-peer sharing of human, physical and intellectual resources (including shared creation, production, distribution, trade and consumption). Now it can be used to describe just about anything 'new'. In reality, while the term is sometimes used to talk about a whole economic ecosystem that some claim is now worth \$30bn per year, others simply use it as a way of referring to just two particular companies - AirBnB and Uber.

**GOGH**  
the bedroom



Whichever perspective you take, there is little doubt that one of the partnership trends of the year was for property owners and sponsor brands to tie-up with these two businesses for utility-led activation initiatives.

For example, in the NFL alone such alliances saw e-tailer Fanatics align with Uber (to deliver in-game LA Rams merchandise), Dicks' Sporting Goods tie-up with Uber (#for a #RushMyShirt Super Bowl winners tee-shirt service) and Ford partner with Uber (for a 'Tough Ticket Tailgating Truck Package').

This Christmas even saw Budweiser and Uber work together on a responsible drinking 'safe home' initiative in the UK.

As for Airbnb, well, probably its most high profile property partnership of 2016 was its IOC Olympic/Paralympic deal that saw it become the 'official alternative accommodation services supplier for the Rio 2016'.

#### **Art Institute Of Chicago & Airbnb - 'Van Gogh's Bedroom' >**

Our favourite was its alliance with the Art Institute Chicago on the Cannes Lions winning 'Van Gogh Bedroom' project.

Developed with agency Leo Burnett at a cost of just \$31,000, at the heart of this partnership was a promotional initiative to draw people to a blockbuster Van Gogh exhibition at the Chicago Art Gallery that saw the alliance build a real-life version of the artist's room, as depicted in one of his most famous paintings, in the heart of city and then put it up for rent (by one Vincent Van Gogh) for \$10-a-night on Airbnb.

This was supported by posters and social media posts also advertising the room for rent.

The famous 'Van Gogh's Bedroom' painting is actually three versions (one each hanging in Amsterdam, Paris and Chicago) and the new exhibition brought them all to-

gether.

The basic, buzz-led idea was simple: it is one thing to see a world-famous painting. It is another thing to stay in it.

The room rental was the key component of an overarching campaign that helped the museum see its largest influx of visitors in years, gain new social media followers (2500 new Facebook followers in 48 hours) and 500 million media impressions and capture \$6m in earned media impressions across 100 countries.

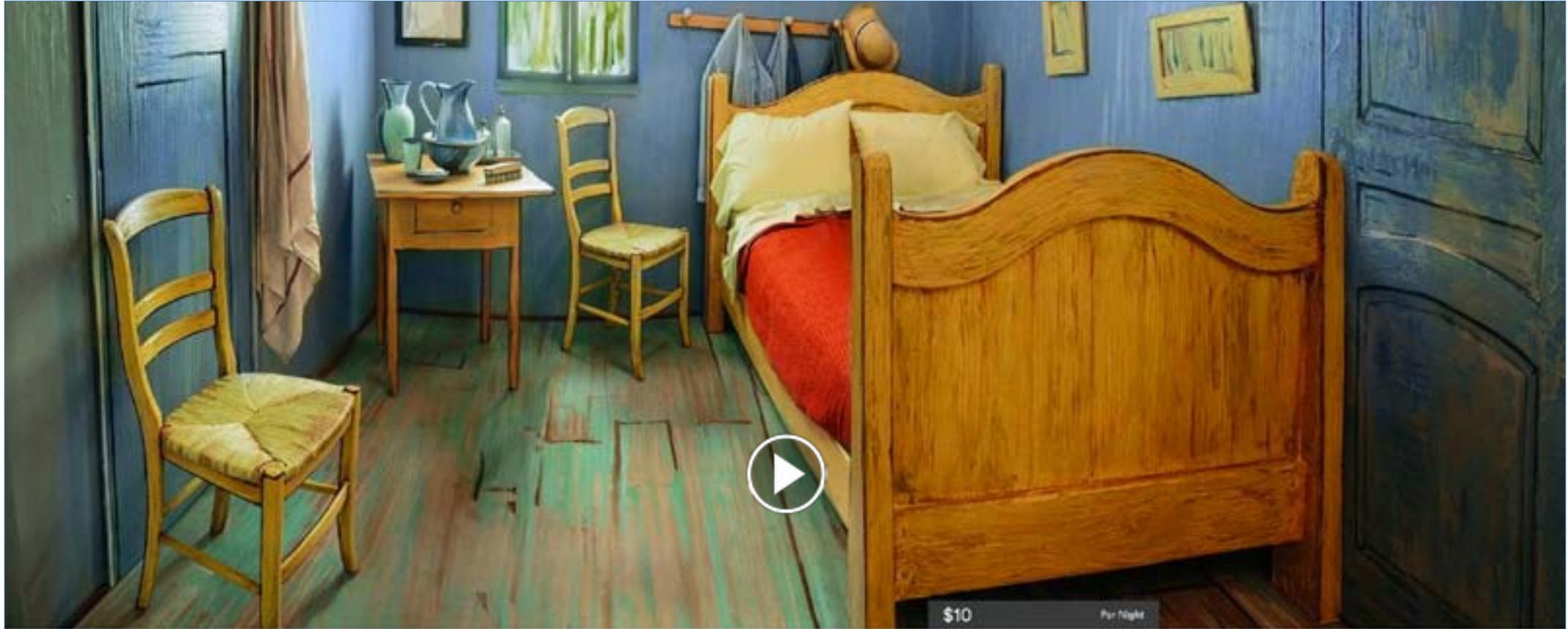
The museum had its biggest opening weekend ever when the exhibition opened on 14 February with 14,608 visitors during the first three days.

Average daily attendance for the opening was almost 70% higher than anticipated and with 200,000-plus visitors.

It became the museum's most popular exhibition ever (73% ahead of its initial target).

The Airbnb partnership amplified reach 950%, the room was booked out solidly and the campaign won awards right around the globe. <





\$10 Per Night



Vincent

### Van Gogh's Bedroom

Chicago, IL, United States

- Entire home/apt
- 3 Guests
- 1 Bedroom
- 1 Bed

Check in:  Check out:  Guests:

[Request to Book](#)



## > Social Becomes (Just) Media

2016 has seen the leading social media giants undergo something of an identity crises as they fight against the inevitability of becoming, simply, media giants. Their bosses might rail against the terminology as they strive to maintain the benefits of a future-facing cool tech brand positioning, but the evidence of Facebook, Twitter and Snapchat moving into the same territory as newspapers and broadcasters is everywhere. The more media partnerships, production, curation and broadcast deals that they sign, the more consumers will come to see them as just media companies.

Thursday Night Football

Jets vs Bills



Pac-12 Network  
The Drive

Today on Twitter

The Wall Street Journal reports that Facebook is paying around 140 media outlets and celebrities to create bespoke video content exclusively for its platform in deals worth \$150m.

While in the US alone shows such as Saturday Night Live, Late Night with Jimmy Fallon and The Voice all have exclusive Snapchat-only series either online or in the pipeline.

While the fake news US election scandal reinforces the evidence of 2016 Pew study showing 44% of Americans read /watch news on Facebook.

In the music festival field we saw 'Coachella Unleashed' by T-Mobile on YouTube Live and Stagecoach 'Powered by Toyota' on Yahoo Live, while the NFL built on the live stream strategy it began last year with a game streamed on Yahoo by signing up with Twitter for 10 Thursday Night Football games for \$10m - while Twitter sells game and season-long sponsorship packages.

While, of course, livestreaming has also brought the US mainstream media monster that is the NFL to the social channels - which surely makes them mainstream media businesses.

September 2016 saw Twitter start streaming a series of 10 NFL games and set out to sell ad packages ranging from \$2m to \$8m and spanning pre-roll spots, in-stream commercials and sponsorships alongside NFL highlights clips.

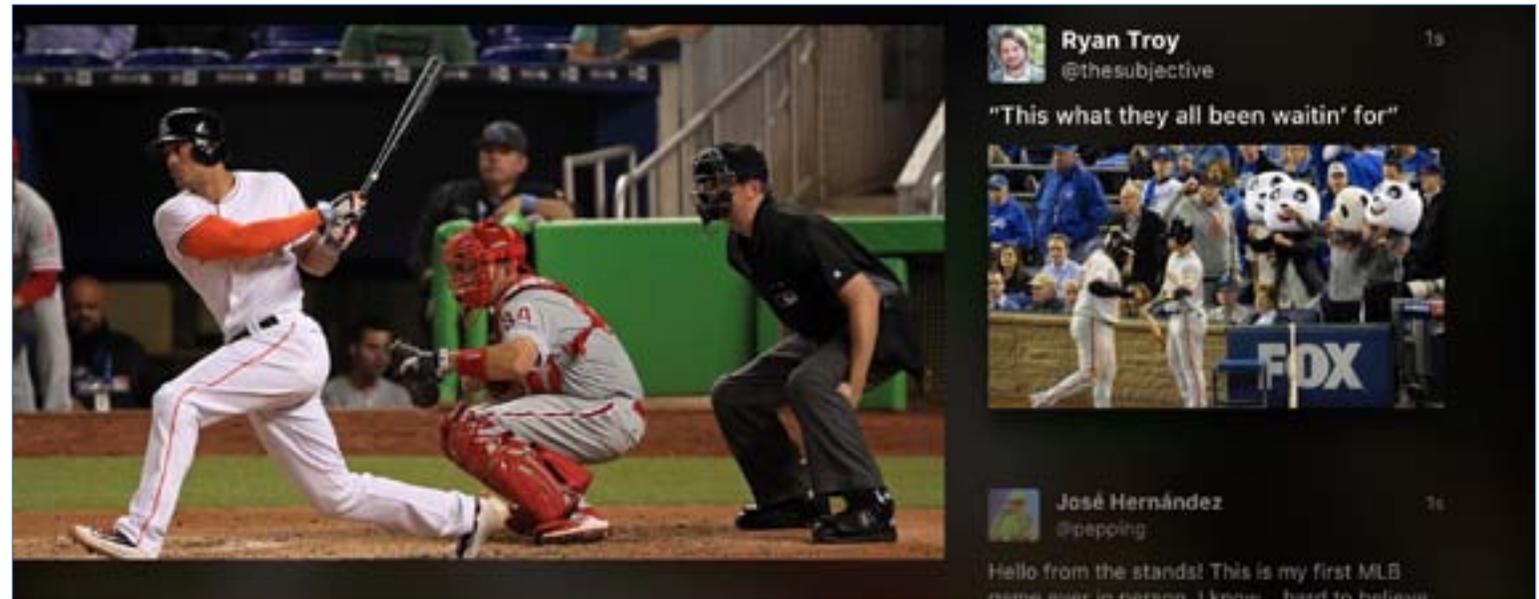
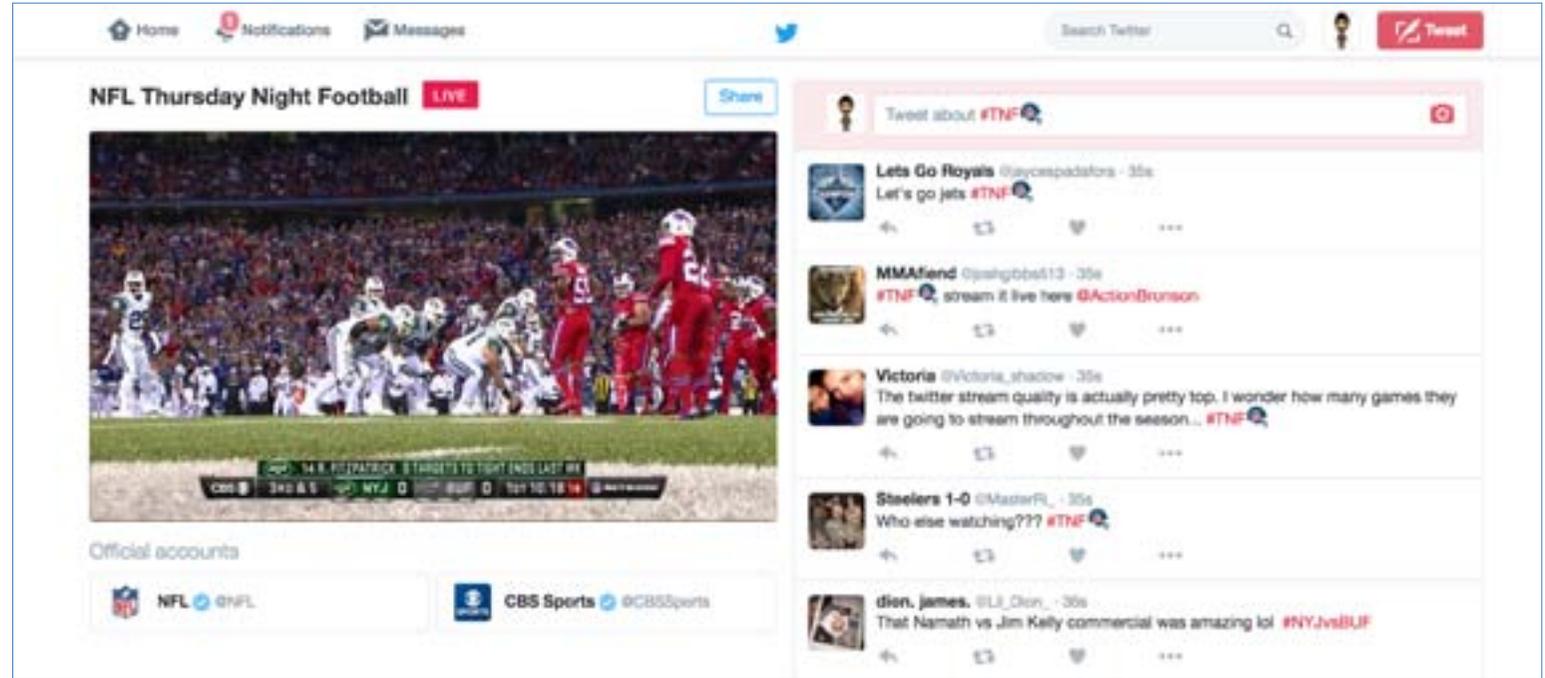
The viewing figures are creeping up from their 2 million cumulative total view mark (compared to the 17 million who often watch on traditional TV) and have past the 3 million mark now.

While viewers who've logged in can join the in-game conversation next to the live video feed.

While the league has subsequently also signed a multi-year deal with Snapchat to create even more curated content (Snapchat Discover and NFL Media are producing content and geo-tagged live stories for each game of the 2016/17 season - including the Super Bowl).

While since penning its NFL deal, Twitter itself has also signed up sports-streaming partnerships with the MLB, NHL and NBA and the battle with rival social brands has begun,

We never really liked the term 'social media' anyway. <





## Attitude Adjustment

Changing people's beliefs and behaviours is an underlying objective of so much marketing, but that doesn't make it any easier. Few people truly embrace change, so challenging convention is, well, challenging. Especially for cause marketers! Cause marketing is growing fast: in the USA cause campaign spending has tripled in the last 10 years to \$2bn (according to CauseGood). From stop smoking and road safety spots, to climate change and responsible drinking initiatives, many of the most effective behaviour change adverts from across the world have been cause-led and there was plenty of admirable CSR activation that aimed to (and succeeded) in alter opinion through 2016.



Take football for example, from the brilliant 'Second Scoreboard' initiative that saw the government, sports broadcaster Teletica and the national soccer association work together to tackle the dreadful links between domestic violence and football in Costa Rica, to Udinese sponsor Dacia's fantastic 'Family Project' to bring in new supporters to replace the banned ultra hooligans in Italy and Heineken's Champions League 'The Cliché' campaign taking on soccer sexism in Sao Paulo, there has been plenty of great work..

The solution to driving behavioural and attitudinal change often lies in a basic understanding of people and of human nature and linking that to something moving and momentous.

Like the Olympics or Paralympics perhaps?

And Rio 2016 saw some ambitious and effective work. From Nike featuring Chris Mosier (the US Team's first ever transgender athlete) in its 'Unlimited' campaign, to Adidas' 'Odds' campaign in India (a unique footwear initiative focusing on the needs of Indian para-athletes that was essentially a pair of shoes for the same foot) there was a lot of activation to admire.

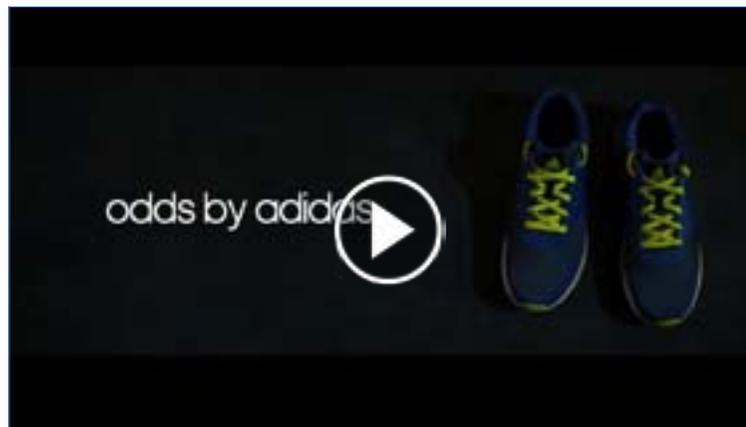
In fact, it was probably the Paralympics that saw the best work of all.

We admired the #FillTheSeats initiative and loved the organising committee's 'Mindchanger Workout', but it was hard to beat UK Channel 4 broadcaster's 'Super Humans' when it came to altering opinions and changing public perception.

**Channel 4 - 'We're The Super Humans' >**

It was always going to be tough for it to follow up its award winning London 2012 host broadcaster Paralympics campaign, but Channel 4 surpassed its previous Games work with an integrated, multi-channel campaign led by a unique, fun and bold blockbuster spot starring 120 people (athletes, musicians and members of the public) with various disabilities performing tasks from the mundane to the magnificent.

The spot forms the core of Channel 4's 'Year of Disability' and aims to show that everyone with a disability can be superhuman - not just the Paralmpians competing in Brazil.



Developed by the C4 in-house team, 4Creative, the commercial was directed by Blink's Dougal Wilson and features a swinging Sammy Davis Jr 'Yes, I Can' soundtrack recorded by a band of disabled musicians.

The track can be downloaded at <http://wearthesuperhumans.com> from 16 July with all profits going to the British Paralympic Association.

The core three-minute film premiered on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube on 14 July and was first broadcast on air the following evening.

Media is being handled by OMD UK and, in a tactic designed to ensure most of the UK sees the ad well before the start of the Olympics, it is running heavily in primetime throughout the first week of the campaign.

It comes in various other formats - from 30-second and 60-second cut downs, to subtitled, signed and audio-described versions (the latter by 'The Last Leg' presenter Adam Hills who's show will return daily during the Paralympics), while shorter versions and clips are running across social media platforms.

The flagship film will be supported by a comprehensive set of multi-platform assets and executions.

There is a set of web-led 'Super Human Story' spots - each focusing on a stand-out, inspiring individual from the fields of sport and entertainment (many of whom feature in the central film).

For example, while some of the biggest names in Paralympic sport discuss what the word 'disability' means to them,

Other story spots include racing driver Bartek Ostalowski, Down's syndrome MMA Fighter G Money, 8-year-old footballer Cody Rayner, as well as drumming sensation Alvin Law, Welsh pianist Rachel Starrit and lead singer of 'The Superhuman Band' Tony Dee.

Plus, during the 14 day break between the end of the Olympics and the start of the Paralympics on 7 September, Channel 4 ran outdoor ads shot by Nadav Kander that feature disabled athletes and non-athletes.

'Before the Olympics start, we want to remind people that the Paralympics is amazing - we want to capture that in people's minds,' said Dan Brooke, Channel 4's chief marketing and communications officer.

'If you've got on the agenda before the Olympics start, then people end the Olympics with energy left to go through the handover period and will be ready.'

Another strand of the initiative was Channel 4's

April 'Superhumans Wanted' initiative: which ran head of the broadcaster's core 'We're The Superhumans' campaign - see case study and which aimed to break down the taboo surrounding disability.

This saw the UK's official Paralympic broadcaster stake £1m worth of commercial airtime as a prize to encourage brands and media and creative agencies to 'prominently feature disability and disabled talent' in their advertising campaigns (see case study).

A key strand of Channel 4's 'Year of Disability', the slots were given to what a Channel 4 panel considered to be the strongest campaign idea.

From the 90-odd entries submitted to the competition, Channel 4 chose a Maltesers idea from Mars Chocolate UK and its creative agency AMV BBDO.

The three 30-second ads star four disabled actors celebrating awkward situations (and interacting with a packet of Maltesers) and are based on real-life stories from disabled people.

In terms of overall results, with 33 million views on Facebook and 7.5 million on YouTube, the spearhead ad's data just for the official Channel 4 social sites alone are stunning. That's before even including other channels and public shares.

Within a few weeks of its launch, by mid August it had become the second most shared Olympics/Paralympics advert in history - attracting more than 1.3 million shares and fast challenging P&G's 'Proud Sponsor Of Mums - Best Job' spot at the top of the all-time Olympic ad share podium.

According to AdPulse UK data, the spot had the highest cognitive responses (knowledge, shock, surprise) of any Olympics ad (while negative emotions were very low at 5% - the UK norm is 19%).

The spot brought on intense emotional responses among 67% of its viewers (76% higher than the UK average): the leading emotions were inspiration (43%) and amazement (35%), while happiness (28%), pride (18%) and exhilaration (9%) were all also well above the UK norm. Surprise was the main cognitive response.

It changed people's opinions of the channel too.

Channel 4's own post-campaign research showed 82% of UK adults agreeing the Paralympics are important for improving society's perceptions of disabled people, 90% of those who'd seen the ad said it was a positive portrayal of disability, 80% felt it showed dis-

ability in a new light, 60% agreed the campaign positively changed their perception of those with disabilities.

Plus, 70% who recalled seeing the trailer said that Channel 4 is the leading broadcaster in the disability area. Indeed, more than 50% of viewers improved their opinion of Channel 4 after watching the ad (a figure that was even higher for younger viewers where 65% of 18-34s saying they had a better perception of Channel 4, compared to 43% for viewers aged 55 and above).

Such a positive view of the Paralympics and the channel also inspired action: 57% of viewers who seen the ad said they wanted to find out more about the coverage and 48% saying they would tune in.

Wow! <



# ACTIVATIVE

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**About Us** > The activation of sponsorship rights and partnership marketing is more creatively and strategically complex than ever - but the potential rewards are greater too.

Activative provides unique intelligence and insights that keep our clients - rights owners, brands, agencies and professional services - at the forefront of this evolving landscape.

The old sponsorship model, based on one directional brand-biased claims, vanilla hospitality, logo badging, eyeball metrics, cost per thousand, reach and frequency, is being replaced by one based on authenticity, customisation, dialogue, interactivity and permissive engagement.

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

Activative explores this landscape's emerging strategies, tactics and trends, champions original thinking and innovation and showcases future facing media and new technologies across the sponsorship community - from sports, music, arts and culture, to education, ecology and cause.

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.

Activative is independent and objective. We are not a mouth-piece for the profession and we have no ties or bias to any agency, rights owner or brand.

Our independent research and objective analysis combine to form directional insights and actionable recommendations.

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

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In addition, for those with a specific challenge or in need of a deeper dive, Activative's research and consulting division offers a range of bespoke services.

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