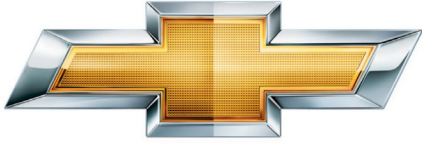


Chevy Sonic “Firsts” campaign leveraged YouTube to engage millennials; led to increased brand lift and consideration



Who they are

Founded in 1911 in Detroit, Chevrolet is now one of the world’s largest car brands, doing business in more than 140 countries and selling more than 4.5 million cars and trucks a year. Chevrolet provides customers with fuel-efficient vehicles that feature spirited performance, expressive design, and high quality.

- Brand channel: www.youtube.com/chevrolet
- Brand website: www.chevrolet.com
- Brand headquarters: Detroit, MI

What they needed to do

- Build awareness and consideration amongst millennials born after 1980
- Drive consumer engagement

What they did

- Created series of made-for-digital videos as part of a digitally-focused, but integrated, campaign across multiple platforms
- Campaign was supported with all TrueView ads formats, standard in-stream, YouTube homepage masthead, YouTube mobile roadblock, and the Google Display Network
- Later retargeted the Sonic Stunts “Skydive” video against Red Bull’s “Stratos” live event video on YouTube, using standard in-stream

What they accomplished

- Increased brand lift and consideration within the target audience
- The Chevy Sonic became the best-selling sub-compact car in the US
- Positive net change in subscribers on YouTube channel, one of the biggest increases in months
- Skydive video targeted against Red Bull’s Stratos led to 9.7 million impressions, over 80,000 clicks, and a 93% standard in-stream video completion rate
- Online campaign was so successful that a Super Bowl ad was later produced



Chevrolet’s Chevy Sonic “Skydive” ad had an in-stream video completion rate of 93% on YouTube, when shown as a pre-roll against Red Bull’s “Stratos” video.

In late 2011, Chevrolet began a “Firsts” campaign to build awareness and consideration amongst millennials. The team honed in on the idea of trying things for the first time, using the Chevy Sonic as a vehicle for new experiences.

The result was a series of made-for-digital videos featuring the Chevy Sonic in a series of highly engaging stunts. These videos were supported by a full suite of YouTube and Google ads, including TrueView, YouTube homepage masthead, and YouTube mobile roadblock. The success led to the eventual production of a Super Bowl ad, and to increased brand lift and consideration. The Sonic also became the best-selling sub-compact car in America.

Chevrolet accomplished this by leading with authentic engagement, and serving relevant content that spoke to the passion points of millennials. The dedicated landing site www.letsdothis.com and YouTube were used as hubs.

Content and media made for engagement

Millennials, comprising youths born after 1980 who are increasingly engaged with digital media, are a highly attractive, but elusive, demographic. “They don’t want brands to talk at them; they want to part of the conversation,” explained Carolin Probst-Iyer, Chevrolet’s Manager of Digital Consumer Engagement.

To engage their audience, Chevrolet saw the Sonic playing a role as a “launchpad of discovery” that would help millennials find and try things for the first time.

“[This] brought us to the concept of encouraging first experiences and sharing those through user-generated content. The Sonic took the lead by doing actual “firsts” with cars: jumping out of a plane, doing its first bungee and kick-flip, the world’s largest 3D projection... Music was also a vital part of the campaign as we partnered with ‘OK Go’ to create Sonic’s first music video, and ‘fun.’ provided the

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For more information visit:

www.youtube.com/advertise

soundtrack to the 'Stunt Anthem' spot that also aired during Super Bowl XLVI."

Chevrolet needed more than just engaging creative, however. They needed engaging media. At 3-4 minutes in length, several of the "Stunts" videos far exceeded the length of the traditional TV spot. But that wasn't a problem. Because of their target audience, these were videos made for the internet and social media. "We couldn't go the traditional way of doing broadcast or print," Carolin explained. "It had to be something engaging and digitally focused."

YouTube, a hub for engagement

During the campaign, these videos were supported by YouTube and Google ad solutions, including TrueView in-stream, TrueView in-display, TrueView in-slate, TrueView in-search, standard in-stream, YouTube homepage masthead, YouTube mobile roadblock, and the Google Display Network. Other video distribution tactics were applied to further extend reach and engagement.

"We pretty much used the entire suite of YouTube ad products and they performed well across the board," revealed Carolin. "We saw a large number of views and great interaction rates. People really wanted to see the videos, comment on them, and share them. The OK Go and Sonic music video, for example, quickly trended on YouTube and garnered more than 20 million views." Chevrolet also noticed a net increase in subscribers on their YouTube channel — one of the largest changes they'd observed in months.

TrueView, in particular, "has proven to be a very effective, and at the same time a very efficient way of advertising on YouTube. We have been applying this for a broad range of campaigns and plan on using it in future," Carolin said.

Chevrolet also focused on measuring engagement-type metrics, leveraging YouTube Analytics. "We looked at specific data about how people watch the content, where our drop-off points are, and what our completion rates are, to get better intel on how we can create further content, who would consume the content, and how it would be shared," Carolin noted.

Most recently, Chevrolet leveraged standard in-stream ads for Red Bull's "Stratos", as they re-ran their original Skydive video as a pre-roll before Red Bull's video of Felix Baumgartner jumping from space. The targeting – watching a freefalling car before freefalling Baumgartner – was seamless. The video led to 9.7 million impressions, over 80,000 clicks, and an impressive in-stream video completion rate of 93%. Talk about true engagement.

Creating long-term success

To Carolin, it's no longer about launching isolated campaigns over time, but about creating sustainable, ongoing engagement. "Certainly now, with digital and social media playing such an important role, there is a broader understanding and notion of being always-on. You want to be credible and authentic in what you do, which means that you have to carry your message and plan your content in a much more sustainable way. Who do we want to talk to and how, not just now but in the long term?"

We know Chevrolet certainly has their answer, starting its conversation with millennials through digital, before expanding outward. When it comes to authenticity and engagement, they certainly come up "first" in the minds of many millennials they have been targeting, with the Sonic becoming the best-selling sub-compact car in the country.

