

# Pioneering ads, insights & strategies /



CONTAGIOUS

**CONTAGIOUS  
PIONEERS  
2020** The best and bravest  
agencies on the planet

# Welcome to the **CONTAGIOUS PIONEERS 2020 REPORT /**


**C**ontagious Pioneers is our list of the agencies that consistently set the standard for excellence in marketing.

We create the list by analysing the work featured in 2019 on I/O, our online database containing the best campaigns from around the world.

Agencies are evaluated on a range of metrics, including: the number of campaigns featured on I/O, the nature

of the coverage, and whether an agency is represented by work for numerous clients or just one.

Basically, it all comes down to the work, and that's why we believe the agencies on our Pioneers list are the best and bravest on the planet.

This report contains examples and analysis of campaigns created by our winning agencies, all taken from Contagious I/O, to show you what it takes to be a Pioneer. 

## **CONTAGIOUS PIONEERS 2020 /**

**Africa**  
São Paulo

**BETC**  
Paris

**CHE Proximity**  
Australia

**Colenso BBDO**  
Auckland

**Dentsu Webchutney**  
India

**Droga5**  
New York

**Happiness**  
Brussels

**McCann**  
New York

**The Brooklyn Brothers**  
London

**VMLY&R**  
Kansas City

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# Pay Per Beer

Africa blends e-commerce and pay-per-view for Brahma in a campaign serving football fans



**B**rahma beer in Brazil let customers order beers with their pay-per-view football matches.

The campaign, cooked up by Africa, was the result of a partnership between Brahma and Globosat, a pay-per-view channel service, during the Brazilian Soccer Championships A Series.

Pay Per Beer allowed viewers to purchase Brahma beers with two clicks of the television remote.

Customers could purchase beer via subscription or via a match-by-match basis.

Brahma also customised cans in the style of team kits from the Brazilian league.

Deliveries were made through Zé Delivery, which is owned by AB InBev (which owns Brahma), and could bring the beer to homes in Brazilian cities in less than an hour.

## CONTAGIOUS INSIGHT /

**New Old Media /** Globosat is an advertising-free channel but Brahma has found a way in through e-commerce, and effectively created a new media/delivery channel out of existing technology. Karen Blackett, WPP UK country manager and chairwoman of MediaCom UK and Ireland Media, as well as the 2019 Cannes Lions Media jury president, said this ingenuity was one reason why the campaign won silver at the festival.

**Calm blue ocean /** Pay Per Beer puts Brahma in a competition-free space, demonstrating what W Chan Kim and Renée



Mauborgne call a blue-ocean strategy. Red oceans are crowded spaces where companies jostle for a greater share of product or market demand. Blue oceans are untapped markets where brands play alone and customer demand is created rather than fought over.

**Right place, right time /** Brahma has invested significant sums to ensure it is associated with football. In January 2019, the brand signed a deal to sponsor the Copa América, South America's biggest international football event. As a result the Pay Per Beer campaign feels on-brand. 🏆

**RESULTS /** According to the agency, Pay Per Beer reached 1.9 million pay-per-view users and received 27,400 subscribers in two months.



# Rebuild The World

BETC helped Lego return to TV advertising with a campaign celebrating the toy-maker's creativity-building credentials

In September 2019 Lego revealed its first branded global campaign in 30 years. Rebuild The World, created in tandem with agency BETC Paris, is a live-action adventure film aimed at sending a positive message about the power of creativity in bringing about change.

Contagious spoke to **Rémi Marcelli**, senior vice president of Lego Group and **Dominique Verot**, vice president of BETC to find out how and why the campaign was made.

**This was the first global Lego branded campaign in 30 years, can you talk us through the decision to do that?**

**Rémi Marcelli:** The starting point was an accumulation of research coming from the World Economic Forum, highlighting a crisis of creativity.

We're seeing the level of creative skills in children diminishing and we have less time to teach our kids to be creative makers (creative with a capital C).

That's because, on the other hand, in the face of artificial intelligence, today we

are still too focused on academic learning. Companies rate creativity as the number one skill that they are looking for in a candidate, and according to the World Economic Forum, 65% of children today will have a job that doesn't exist yet. They will have to learn how to do their jobs later and to be creative

in how they approach this challenge.

But there is another factor at play here, of course: Lego. At Lego, we have always considered ourselves part of creative activity. When a child is playing with Lego, they are developing creative skills, even if they are not necessarily seeing it or realising it at the time.



But over time we have begun to be viewed as a toy, a model that is to be built and played with. During a creativity crisis, we had to reiterate our message and get back to what we were always about: developing creativity.

**Dominique Verot:** For many new families, the brand is still too related to following instructions. In short, everyone knows Lego, but not everyone connects Lego System in Play with creativity.

**In the Rebuild The World TV spot, there are many Easter eggs for people like me who played with Lego 20 years ago. This makes me wonder, who is this campaign aimed at? What is the primary audience here?**

**Marcelli:** The primary audience is more parents or gift givers or anyone who would consider purchasing Lego because they know how popular it is with children, but only see it for the model set. We wanted to show the world the true value of Lego, which is creativity. Parents are the core targets, but we also wanted something exhilarating for children to watch because at the end of the day that is who we are there for.

The Easter eggs signify another level to the message. We wanted to A, surprise people who have a set theory or perception of Lego and B, it had to be delightful for kids. And then there's C, we wanted to send a message to our fans and the people who know who we are because they are so valuable to us that we can't ignore them.



**We are in that rare position where it is both the parents and the children who see the value in our product. If we are to maintain this trust in the future, we must ensure that we make a strong case for our creative value**

Rémi Marcelli, Lego Group

#### What are your thoughts on balancing Lego's legacy, which is so tactile with the modern, more digital world?

**Marcelli:** Well first things first, the brick is 100% here to stay. The building, creating, failing and trying again is here to stay. What we want to do is embrace the fact that there are more digital devices and digital solutions out there. We are launching products that are fluid play experiences where you can play with the set in the physical world, but also enhance your play through augmented reality. This isn't a question you would ask Fifa.

They have a world-famous triple-A video game title, but we are not questioning the fact that there will still be kids who want to be footballers, and who will just play the game and have fun on the field. Lego isn't antithetical to the modern world; it will always be relevant and only amplified by digital.

#### What are the brand's key challenges right now?

**Marcelli:** The main problem is being purchased for the right reason. I think for a while we were a little bit out of balance –

emphasising the model toy aspect more than the creativity side – because it worked for so well for us. Fortunately, we are in that rare position where it is both the parents and the children who see the value in our product. If we are to maintain this trust in the future, we must ensure that we make a strong case for our creative value. Fortunately, the house is not currently on fire, this is more about setting the foundations for the next wave of growth.

#### Are there any competitors on the scene? What are your thoughts on

#### Minecraft, for example?

**Marcelli:** Our main competition remains time and ensuring that children have enough to play with our product. Whenever there's passive consumption of something where the child isn't learning, that's the space we want to operate in. We see Minecraft more as a partner in this endeavour. There are, after all, Lego Minecraft sets out there.

#### Even though you have a formidable in-house agency, you decided to go with an external agency. Why?



**Marcelli:** We viewed this as more of a partnership than as a client/agency relationship. I had people from my team and me, who were deeply involved in the creative process.

I was a client, and my internal client, the person in charge of brand development, I was accountable to him, no matter where the work was coming from. So, it was a real partnership, I had BETC people coming over here, spending time with my guys, and I had my guys spending time with BETC. Although broadly speaking the creative output and the Rebuild The World idea and execution came from them, it was really a partnership.

The reason why we wanted to have a partnership with an external agency is simple. First, they bring inspiration and help to keep everybody on their toes. But also, it can be hard to get a clear view of what to do when you're so close to the ground and involved in your product. By bringing in an external perspective, it makes it more likely that something surprising or more spontaneous will appear in the creative process.

The Lego team brought the authenticity (the external agency alone would never have found the Easter eggs for example, that had to come from within our deep knowledge of the brand). However, execution-wise, we would never have been able to come up with something like Rebuild The World, even with our most creative people working on it. We needed that outside inspiration. It wasn't outsourcing, more combining people who



love Lego: one team who knew the brand very well, and the others who could rock the boat a bit.

#### ▤ And the result was a Lego advert with no Lego in.

**Marcelli:** Well there are a few at the end. But that was a bit of the brief I pushed for. My brief to the agency was don't fall into the trap of just doing stop motion or something akin to *The Lego Movie* – we are already well known and respected on that front. Everyone knows Lego – but not the creativity message, that was what we were pushing for, the message.

**Verot:** That message being limitless creativity, every child can build and rebuild in infinity, imagining creative solutions, wild stories and new worlds.

#### ▤ What was it like to work with an external agency, when your in-house team is so formidable?

**Marcelli:** There were a lot of regular catch-ups, and workshops. Usually, the biggest challenge for an external agency would be that the clients are not creative people, which is why the magic spark happened here. Both parties were extremely creative in nature. It gives a very different dynamic to the

relationship between an agency and the client, because you have creative people talking to one another, sometimes it's good, because you can understand each other, and sometimes there's a healthy tension because of the passion involved – which is even better.

#### ▤ Is that the key to good creative?

**Marcelli:** It's exactly that. But it doesn't work without passion. Luckily at Lego, we love the brand so much, there's a real sense of belonging and I would say 100% of the Lego employees took the job because it was at Lego and not actually for what the job was, the job title comes second.

BETC respected and loved the brand so much that we really had a shared agenda, we had the shared vision and a shared ambition to do something spectacular, that wouldn't harm the brand.

#### ▤ Finally, how do you judge success for this campaign?

**Marcelli:** What we will try to measure is how much people think building with Lego is considered a creative activity. This will take time to measure, and it won't happen one day to the next. But when parents talk about creativity, they mention Lego as an activity that will help them to develop their child's creativity: that would be the big win. This isn't a sales-based campaign, there are other ways to drive sales. Ultimately, it's about making sure that we are purchased for the right reason. ▤

For every campaign featured on **Contagious I/O**, we follow up with the agency to find out the effectiveness results.

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# Safety Hub

CHE Proximity came up with a business solution, not an ad, to help insurer NRMA prove its worth to all customers, not just claimants

Australian insurer and roadside assistance provider, National Roads and Motorists' Association (NRMA), created an app that rewards its customers for taking precautions against disasters.

NRMA invited 156,000 high-risk Australians to download its Safety Hub app and then alerted users to things like incoming rain storms.

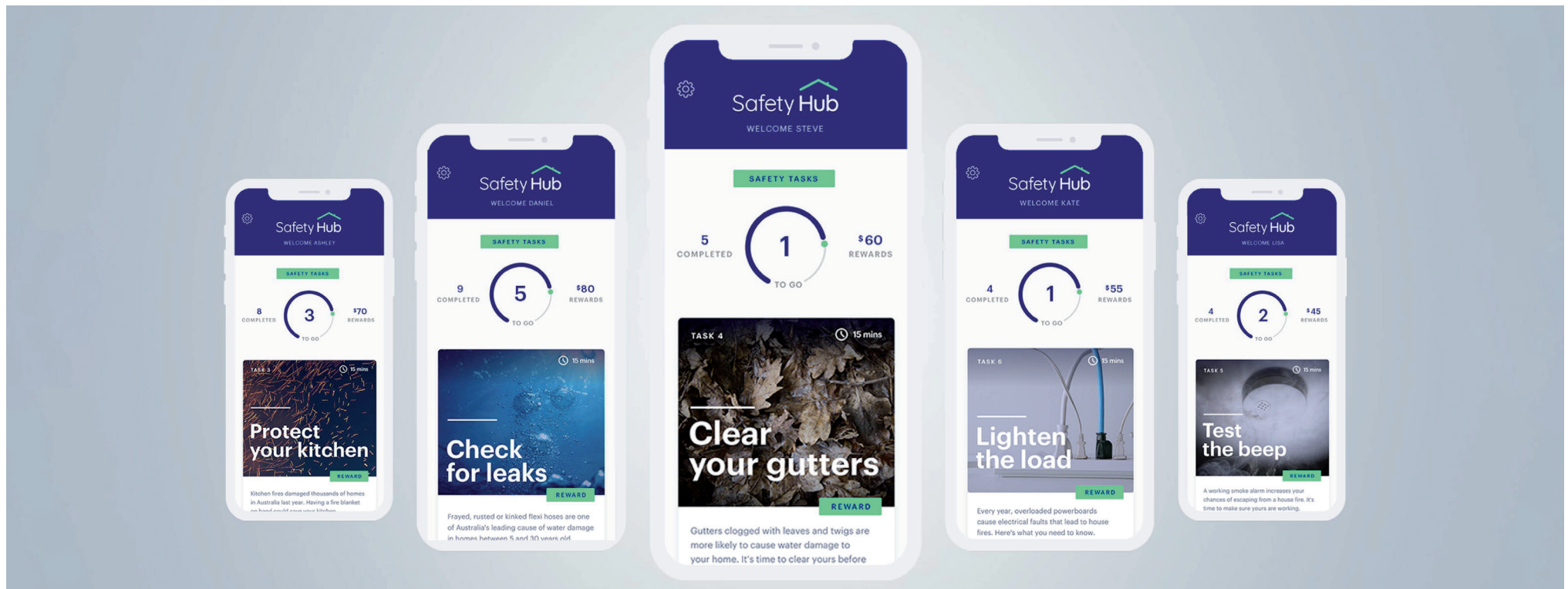
The insurer also set users tasks, such as clearing clogged gutters and replacing fire safety equipment, which would reduce

the likelihood of them making a claim after heavy weather.

Those who provided picture evidence (uploaded to the app) that they had completed the tasks were rewarded with cash prizes transferred into their accounts.

For some tasks, which required a particular set of skills, NRMA organised for a professional to do the job instead.

Contagious spoke with **Chris Howatson**, CEO of CHE Proximity, the agency behind the Safety Hub app, about the campaign.



## If NRMA insurance is there to make your world a safer place, then actually we should tell you what the risks are and help you reduce them

Chris Howatson, CHE Proximity

### What kind of challenge was NRMA facing?

There are a lot of new market insurers attacking [NRMA] with price-based deals. So the strategy for NRMA is always to have a superior product that demonstrates its purpose, which is to make your world a safer place.

In the context of this campaign, there were a couple of issues that drove it there. The first is that only 10% of customers a year ever experience the brand in its peak state, which is when they make claims.

Although the people who do make claims spend more money, stay longer and buy more products, we have this big split where something has to go wrong for other customers to experience the brand at its best. When it comes to that 90% of people who don't claim, the customer base is heavily skewed to baby boomers and what we're starting to find is that as baby boomers retire, they're becoming a little bit more price sensitive.

So how do you give those baby boomers and other people on the database the claims experience without actually having to give out claims? The answer lies in giving them

the experience of NRMA without them being impacted by any emergency or peril. That was the starting point for Safety Hub.

### So what was the brief you received?

We were presented with a problem rather than a marketing brief, which was, how do we demonstrate the value of NRMA to the people who don't claim?

What we did was basically dig into some data until we understood how people who do claim feel, their purpose and what NRMA are trying to achieve as an organisation.

With that we basically approached it from a service design point of view, rather than a classic creative point of view. This meant thinking about what experience we could deliver to customers that would solve the problem.

We felt like it wasn't something that an ad could solve, it had to be an experience. For a problem like that, talk is cheap. Customers had to experience the value of NRMA and that is why we took it from a service design approach.

### And how did that brief lead you to the idea for Safety Hub app?



Our thought was, what if you combine the business purpose with the business problem? This led us to the idea of taking the money that we would normally pay out in claims and use it to help people be safe in the first place, and therefore the experience of the brand would be open to everybody who is a customer of NRMA, not just a claimant.

The brand had to shift from a transactional relationship, one that was based around responding to issues, to a values-based relationship, which was being proactive and demonstrating a purpose so that people could avoid claims altogether.

### How did this new proactive approach alleviate the challenges that NRMA was facing?

The way insurance works is that you insure a product, and the customer insuring that product is against two variables: where you are located and how safe you are as a person. For example, you're a less safe person if you have lots of car accidents, etc. So insurers totally understand how risky a customer is and how risky the location they're in is.

Our thought was, rather than keep that information to ourselves and use that just to inform our premium, what if we helped reduce people's risk by making them aware of the information? This then became the basis of the tasks we put in Safety Hub. We used the data that we have on people to profile their risk and shared that data to help them be safe in the first place.



The big idea here is that if NRMA insurance is there to make your world a safer place, then actually we should tell you what the risks are and help you reduce them.

#### How did you get the client to approve the bold idea of giving would-be claims money away?

Full credit to the client, the moment they saw it, they thought it was great, which is unbelievable. The CMO, Brent Smart, really values creativity in terms of solving problems.

So the way we presented it initially was to stick all of our work on a wall, there was no formal presentation, it was just ideas on the wall. Smart went through ones he thought were good and when he saw this idea, he said, 'That one, I like that one.'

#### How was the launch? Did anything crop up that was unexpected?

We were initially planning to launch it to the whole customer base, which is close to 5 million customers, a big deal in Australia. However, in the end, we decided to just do a pilot. You can guess that giving out money for completing tasks was a risk and there were some people in the business who thought that it would be a real worry. We had already tested the app and knew it worked so there was no issue with that, there were just concerns about if this campaign was really successful. There was a big unknown risk about how much money we could be giving away, so the idea was that we would test it.

We did this on 400,000 customers, which

felt like a big enough sample to understand how it would play out with a few different audience segments. After that trial, we started to see some interesting effects on people who use it and their attention rates overtime. We measured this by seeing which people interacted with the app against those who didn't and measured the difference between that over time, along with key metrics such as the number of products, retention rate and average premium paid.

#### How did people find out about the app?

It was invitation-only to existing customers because this campaign is very customer

based. It was promoted in addressable channels, such as email, SMS and addressable digital. Also, when people called our call centre, depending on what the call was for, we introduced this as a way to reach out to them or help them manage their bills.

#### What is the next stage?

We are looking to roll it out to all customers in New Zealand and Australia.

#### Have you had any initial results yet and how is this being measured?

The original advocacy that came from it was off the charts. NPS and intention to purchase are doing well. The good thing about this is


that everybody that used the app in its pilot, as part of the onboarding process had to complete a survey about what they thought of the brand. Afterwards, the questions were the same and helped us see how those things changed.

#### What has been your single greatest learning from this campaign and how do you think this will be applied to your future work?

My single biggest learning is that when you're truly trying to shift someone's perception of the brand, the experience far outweighs anything that could be said in an ad. We've all been trained to think that brand management is often delivered through advertising, but this campaign is an example of brand management being delivered through customer experience.

#### Do you think that the future of advertising is in delivering great customer experiences?

Advertising is excellent at conditioning the experience but when you have people who understand the brand, the best way to manage your brand is to deliver it as an experience, that's what Safety Hub is.

Each customer had been with NRMA a decade, some of them more and nothing we could tell them in advertising was going to change their perception of the brand. We had to deliver them something in an experience, and it was the act of this experience that changed their perception. 



# Every Dog Has Its Ad

Colenso BBDO made more than 100,000 tailored ads to promote Puppo's personalised pet food and increased organic searches for the brand by 144%

**P**uppo, which provides personalised dog-food to its subscribers, created a campaign targeting every single dog in New York – 100,729 unique ads in total.

Working with Colenso BBDO, Auckland, Puppo made a bespoke ad for every dog registered in NYC using data from the NYC Dog Licensing Dataset, which records the name, age, breed, borough and zip code of each dog in the city.

Each ad stated the name and breed of each dog along with a health benefit of using Puppo's services. For example, one ad read: 'Hi Daisy. Get a feast for Collies who want a coat worth barking about.'

At the bottom of each ad was a QR code that could be scanned with a smartphone and took the owner to Puppo's website. Owners were targeted by zip code and posters were placed within dog-walking distance from their homes.

The Every Dog Has its Ad campaign was also promoted by digital OOH and display ads.

We caught up with Colenso BBDO's **Emma Tait**, the lead data and digital strategist behind the campaign, and **Kim Ragan**, creative director, to find out more about the strategy behind the campaign and the risks surrounding the use of consumer data.

## ❖ Please give an overview of the brand.

**Emma Tait:** Puppo is a petcare startup that has recently joined the Mars Petcare division, Kinship, through its venture capital fund. Puppo is a startup brand in its infancy and has a very localised customer base in NYC, so previous brand activity was limited and had been driven primarily through PR and influencer activity. With competitors like Purina's 'Just Right' pet food and Pet Diet Designer, we had to up the game.

## ❖ What are the brands priorities, in terms of challenges?

**Tait:** With people increasingly humanising their pets and treating them like part of the family, it's an inevitable step that Puppo

would offer something that catered to this. Puppo's product combines a simple user experience with a premium personalised diet for dogs. However, the biggest challenge for Puppo is that this is an innovative service that consumers don't expect. Both the product proposition and the young brand itself, had no credibility.

## ❖ What was the brief you received from the client?

**Tait:** In order to grow, Puppo needed to convince New York's dog owners that this level of premium personalisation was available, the right thing for their dog and that Puppo was the brand that could deliver it. The brief was to do so in a way that dramatised the brand's purpose ('celebrating the uniqueness of every dog') to explain what Puppo is and give it credibility by making consumers believe it had scale.

## ❖ What led you to the idea of creating an individual ad for every dog in New York?

**Kim Ragan:** Petcare is a well established





and competitive category. Fortunately, we knew that Puppo's personalised food for every dog and a highly targeted campaign would cut through the masses while remaining relevant for the brand. When you talk to dog owners, you find that they believe their dog is just as much of an individual as they are. We wanted to target dog owners who have this feeling of responsibility to their dog's health and direct them to sign up for a Puppo subscription plan for their dog by demonstrating that each unique dog requires a unique diet. We chose out-of-home as our hero medium because our target audience were likely to be out on the streets walking their dog. We supported the campaign with digital display because we knew that the audience were likely to also be hugely active on devices. In short, our solution was to take an approach that was as unique as the dogs that we wanted to eat Puppo food.

## ■ We've seen a host of startups that are catering to the personalised dog food market, how does this make Puppo stand out?

**Ragan:** By being the first company to market directly to every dog, we were showing owners that we understand both the nutritional needs of the dogs and are empathetic to the fact that all owners believe that their dogs are unique. When it came to personalisation, we were going to walk the walk and hopefully get some dogs to follow along.

## ■ How did you pull off this feat of personalisation?

**Ragan:** We created a bespoke piece of technology that used an algorithm to create personalised placements. It utilised data from the NYC Dog Licensing Dataset and linked each dog to a unique Puppo health benefit. It then put all of this data into a sophisticated

modular copy and art direction system that generated thousands of combinations of iconography, colours and fonts alongside the dog's name, breed and a health benefit. The print posters and digital out-of-home targeted owners by zip code, within dog-walking distance from where they lived. These placements were supported by geo-targeted digital display, to ensure we got the reach needed for every NYC dog to see their advert.

## ■ Please explain more about the algorithm you used. How did you develop it?

**Tait:** It was vital to the execution of the idea that we made sure every output was truly unique. Coupled with the name and breed from the dataset and three-to-10 health benefits per breed from Puppo's specialists, we designed three fonts, 20 icons, 10 colour combinations and five different QR

code designs (which went directly to the dog's personalised landing page). This enabled us to have so many different unique combinations. For the digital outputs, we leveraged the Google Marketing Platform's existing algorithm but for print we had to start from scratch. We tasked one of our developers to build a piece of software that ingested the data and output the individual print-ready posters.

## ■ Is making so many individual ads a cost-effective way of making Puppo stand out from the pack versus traditional media techniques?

**Ragan:** While this is a staggering number of ads to create, it was much more cost effective than having a one-size-fits-all execution to flood an already saturated market; Puppo is a startup and we simply didn't have the budget to play that game.



## Personalisation at scale is a powerful tactic, but a line that has to be walked incredibly carefully. It can be highly effective when used well, but it can be incredibly damaging to a brand if used badly

Emma Tait, Colenso BBDO

### How did Puppo get access to the New York City Dog Licensing Dataset? Was it difficult?

**Ragan:** All dog owners that reside in NYC are required by law to license their dogs. The data is sourced from and maintained by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Dog Licensing System. We got access to the dataset through the Open Data website provided by the city of New York. For every dog in NYC, we were provided the name, gender, birth, month, breed, borough and zip code.

### What about the ethical questions around this campaign (being able to access people's addresses for example without their knowledge)?

**Ragan:** The controversy brought about from the likes of Cambridge Analytica and the Ashley Madison data breach has meant data security is at an all-time high. Consumers are increasingly wary of their privacy and how brands are using their data. As marketers, it's our responsibility to treat it with respect,

as much as our legal obligation. We didn't want to use, or even access, any data we didn't need to execute the idea. We came to the realisation pretty quickly that we didn't actually need any information on people. We avoided any personal identifiable data and instead looked at the information on the dog itself; we talked to our customers' best friends and hoped that they would pass on the word.

### How did you put up so many posters?

**Ragan:** With a small army. Being on the other side of the world posed some logistical challenges around getting them up, but we partnered with Milk Money who helped us find the best spots and seamlessly got the posters out for us.

### Tell us about the media plan in place – how did you ensure this would create noise?

**Tait:** We were highly focused on delivering our idea in its purest form: print ads. This meant we didn't actually want to create noise, we didn't need everyone to see our

campaign. We just needed the right people to see it. That's why every dog's placement was within dog-walking distance from their home.

### Why did you decide to make so many of the ads as print posters rather than more dynamic digital OOH?

**Ragan:** People are becoming increasingly familiar with digital outputs, be it online or OOH, being personalised or at least localised. The same just isn't true for the more traditional printed posters. We hoped that this unexpected use of a traditional format would be even more attention-grabbing and it looks like it was. Although print posters were our hero medium, we used digital OOH and online display ads targeted to those areas where it wasn't possible to place street posters.

### How is this campaign building on Puppo's long-term business strategy?

**Tait:** As Puppo's first consumer facing campaign, this was all about driving consumer awareness around Puppo's brand purpose to 'celebrate the uniqueness of every dog' by demonstrating the value of the personalisation that Puppo offers to owners and their dogs. Startups often struggle to increase brand awareness very quickly and their long-term strategy is about maximising online subscriptions. This is fulfilled by a campaign that's focused on driving people to the Puppo platform and converting them into subscribers of their personalised monthly subscription plans for their pup.

### What are your views on personalisation at scale as an advertising tactic?

**Tait:** Personalisation at scale is a powerful tactic, but a line that has to be walked incredibly carefully. It can be highly effective when used well, but it can be incredibly damaging to a brand if used badly. Data concerns are ensuring marketers and agencies continue to shift to true customer centricity – not just knowledge on the customer to talk to them, but to understand them, put their needs and wants at the core of the business. If we can use a person's details in an ad, it doesn't necessarily mean that we should. It may get the customer's attention, but it doesn't guarantee that they will respond well. It's exciting to think about the endless possibilities, but we need to make sure that we're constantly asking ourselves about the value that the customer will get. Marketers and agencies need to make sure they keep themselves in check – we have an ethical responsibility to use data without making it feel creepy. Just because we can, doesn't mean we should.

**RESULTS /** According to the agency, the client saw a 68% increase in new site users within one week of running the ads, and 28% of that traffic came directly from the posters. There was also a 144% increase in organic searches for Puppo.

# Voice Of Hunger

Dentsu Webchutney tinkered with Instagram's new voice note function to create a competition that boosted food delivery platform Swiggy's reach 7,700%

Indian food ordering and delivery platform Swiggy used Instagram's new voice note feature to promote its service.

Swiggy challenged Instagram users to create sound waveforms in the shape of different food items and send them via direct messenger to the brand's Instagram.

Working with digital agency Dentsu Webchutney, the brand promised a year's worth of food vouchers to whoever could complete the five-day Voice of Hunger challenge and replicate various foods from kebab skewers to pancakes using voice notes. Swiggy also handed out 50 food vouchers to customers with the best entries each day.

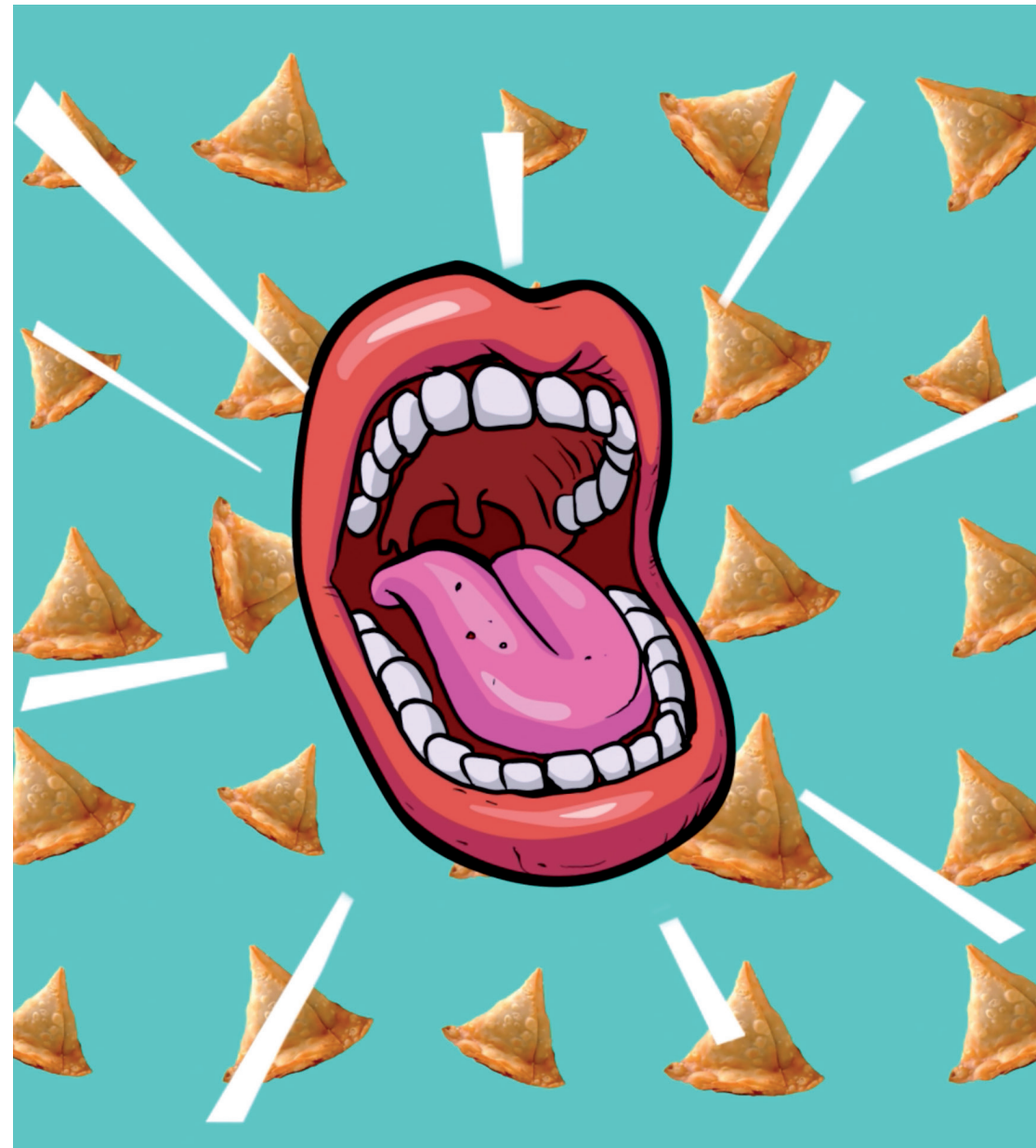
We caught up with **Prashant Gopalakrishnan**, the senior vice president of client services at Dentsu Webchutney, and **GD Prasad**, the associate vice president of client

services at the agency, to uncover more about the strategy and insight behind the campaign.

**Can you tell us more about the brand and how it has evolved over the past five years?**

**GD Prasad:** Swiggy was founded in 2013 and they were only operational in one city, Bangalore. Today it's grown to operate in over 80 cities in the country. Their journey has been very similar to the likes of Uber Eats; Swiggy's business model is pretty much the same.

**Prashant Gopalakrishnan:** In India, unlike many other countries, people aren't completely comfortable doing online transactions and Swiggy understands this. As a result, it's simplified the food delivery system as much as possible to give it mass appeal.



### What would you say the brand's key challenges are right now?

**Prasad:** They want to get more people used to the fact that they can order food online. There is still a large proportion of India that has not been exposed to this kind of service. However, a lot of people have access to mobile phones and are able to access Swiggy's services. Right now their challenge is to penetrate more cities and expand into things that aren't just food. The brand is well established in the minds of the consumers, but now they need to figure out what they can do better with the same audience.

### Did you receive a brief for this campaign?

**Prasad:** No, this was a campaign that we proactively pitched to them. We've had a relationship with the brand for the past three years and we know what their challenges are and what they are aiming for. It was an idea that we came up with internally and we thought it was a great fit for Swiggy. We then built it to meet some of the objectives that we knew they would want to overcome or chase. It was our idea, but we based it off stuff that we already knew about the brand.

### What challenge did you want to overcome with this campaign?

**Prasad:** The number of customers Swiggy has is far greater than the number of people that follow them on their social platforms. They know that business is going to come irrespective of this, but they want social

campaigns that are fun, engaging and memorable so that the brand would be spoken about.

### What was the insight behind this idea?

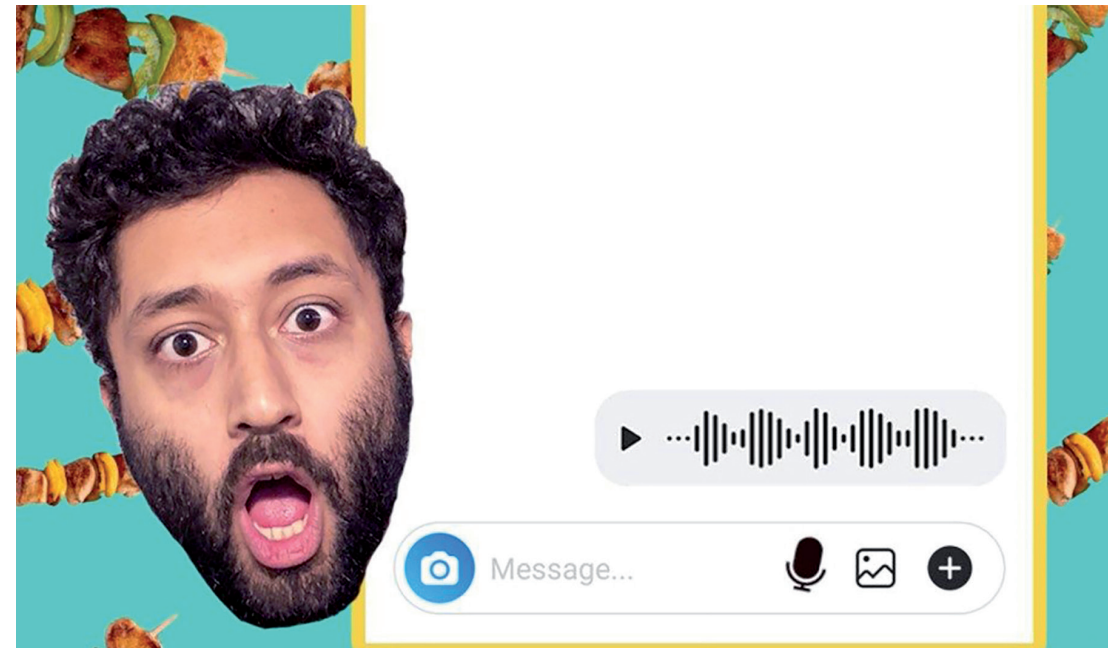
**Prasad:** The true insight is that there are a lot of people who are wasting their time on the internet and we just wanted to see if we could have fun with that.

**Gopalakrishnan:** The person who came up with the idea was a 22-year-old guy who was playing with this new voice note feature on Instagram and thought it was cool. He sent a note to our director who immediately saw that it had the potential to be used in a campaign. What brought this campaign to life was having the foresight to see that it was something that could really engage the public.

**Prasad:** People go crazy over creating content, participating and putting stuff out onto the internet. That's what we capitalised on. We gave them something interesting and challenging so that they would want to engage with it. The entries people sent showed us just how creative the public can get, even going so far as to use things like hairdryers and pets to make certain noises.

### Why did you choose to use Instagram above other social channels that have the voice note feature?

**Prasad:** After we noticed that the waveforms of the voice notes resembled the shapes of food in Instagram's direct messenger platform, we tried it out on other social



channels. Facebook messenger and WhatsApp also have voice note capabilities, but it just didn't look as good. It was Instagram alone that allowed us to make it look like food. That's why we did the entire campaign on Instagram.

### Who was this aimed at?

**Prasad:** We were going for the younger generation who tend to be more willing to experiment with new things, particularly on social media. This was a new feature and not one that many people knew about. As a result, we had to aim for a demographic that would be more aware of it and more likely to want to join in.

**What brought this campaign to life was having the foresight to see that it was something that could really engage the public**

Prashant Gopalakrishnan, Dentsu Webchutney



### What challenges did you face along the way and how did you overcome them?

**Prasad:** The biggest challenge was traffic. We had too many people messaging us with their voice notes. We were receiving close to seven or eight voice notes every second and it took an army of people to sit down and respond to each and every one of them. It also resulted in Instagram blocking our account because there's an algorithm on Instagram that figures out the number of messages that come in per minute and they thought that our account was spam.

### Did you anticipate the response to the campaign?

**Prasad:** We didn't expect this many people to respond at all. We thought we'd end up receiving about 400 to 500 voice notes. Instead, we had over 150,000 voice notes in Swiggy's Instagram inbox.

### Tell us a bit about the media plan you had in place. How did you ensure that this would create noise?

**Prasad:** I think it was our careful choice of influencers. We didn't engage with any other platforms to spread the campaign. We picked who we knew had the right reach and the personality to do something wacky like this.

**Gopalakrishnan:** We needed people with a good personality, but also who fit the brand image perfectly as being fun and a bit out there. Everything else was



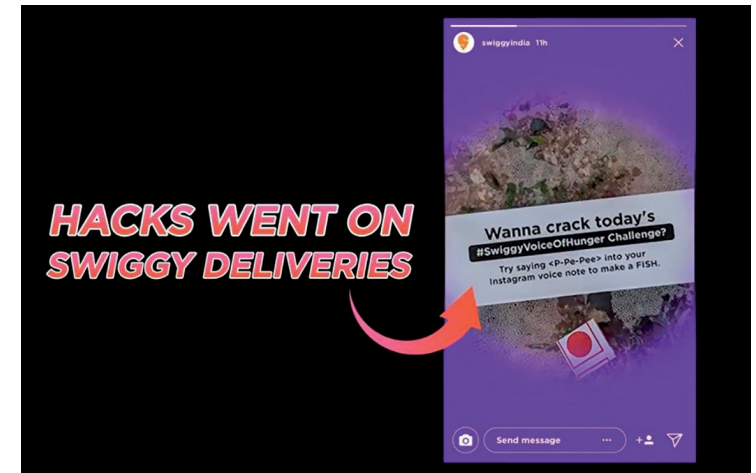
organic reach that occurred as people began picking up on the campaign and inviting their friends to play.

### What has been your greatest learning from the campaign?

**Prasad:** We honestly need to plan better. If we had known or predicted the response, I think we would have had a better setup from day one to handle the incoming messages. The other thing would be to have people in place who could manage the whole PR strategy. We were all donning different hats so to speak. One day we were dealing with the direct messaging, another day the social channels and at times talking to influencers. Then we also had to field calls from people who saw this was happening and wanted to talk to us about it. It would have been helpful to have a team handling all of this so we could get on with the campaign.

### Is there anything else that you would like to mention that we haven't discussed?

**Prasad:** There was one more challenge that emerged just a few days before the campaign. Earlier we mentioned that we were choosing the influencers based on their personalities. What was interesting was that this campaign occurred at the same time that India was hit with the #MeToo movement. A lot of famous Indian intellectuals were brought into the controversy surrounding it. We had a list of people that we wanted to work with and we had to pretty much change that overnight and delay the campaign by two weeks. Swiggy is a brand that really cares about its image and we needed to be extremely careful about the people we were associating it with.



**RESULTS** / According to the agency, there were over 10,000 entries on the first day of the campaign and there were over 150,000 voice notes in its Instagram inbox by the end of the competition. The brand experienced a 7,700% increase in its Instagram reach and saw brand interaction rates grow by 1,165%. Swiggy saw a 2,100% increase in traffic to the platform from Instagram. The campaign led to a 40% rise in the brand's followers on Instagram resulting in over 40,000 new 18- to 35-year-olds joining its Instagram community. There was also a 24% average increase in orders for food resembling its most popular voice note creations.

**Contagious I/O** details the entire lifecycle of a campaign, from its business objectives, through the creative execution to its effectiveness.

To access more precedents for how others have successfully overcome your brand's marketing challenges, email **[ollie@contagious.com](mailto:ollie@contagious.com)**



# The Truth Is Worth It

How Droga5 helped The New York Times demonstrate the value of its product at a time of anti-press rhetoric, by paying homage to its journalists



Trace Spyware to Government

**F**aced with declining print sales, a growing distrust of news organisations and an increasing tendency among people to confuse opinion with fact, The New York Times sought to remind its readers of the value of the truth.

As part of its long-running The Truth Is Hard campaign, The New York Times worked with Droga5 New York to create The Truth Is Worth It, a series of ads about the lengths to which its reporters go to find and publish news.

The spots, called Persistence, Fearlessness, Rigor and Resolve follow New York Times journalists including Hannah Beech, Caitlin Dickerson and Rukmini Callimachi in their pursuit of the truth of stories, from the separation of immigrant children from their parents at US borders, to the Myanmar crisis.

We spoke to **Nick Maschmeyer**, group strategy director at Droga5 New York, to find out more about the insights that led to the campaign.

**What was the brief you received for these ads, and how was it different from those you received for earlier installations of the campaign?**

This campaign was really about starting a broader cultural conversation about the importance of truth in a time when it seemed like there was a real deficit of it, when people were really just waking up to the fact that fake news is a reality and a threat. It's now harder to discern what's true and what's not.

That's partially because news is mediated through social networks and mobile phones, and so it's really cloudy and opaque to tell what's fact, what's opinion, what's fake news. It's compounded by the fact that some organisations are dressing up opinion like it's hard news.

In terms of our news, we've really swapped objectivity for subjectivity. There was a survey recently that showed that three out of five Americans can't tell the difference between a factual hard news headline and an opinion headline, so not only was fake news an issue [when 'The Truth Is Hard' first launched], but now we're asking, 'so where do we find the actual truth?'

The previous work is mainly about shining a light on that serious issue and starting a conversation. The evolution from The Truth Is Hard to The Truth Is Worth It, is about being actively involved in mitigating this threat by encouraging people to support journalism, to find and seek out credible journalistic sources. We based it on the reader insights we have that people are looking for a way to cut through the clutter.

Online news is so ubiquitous now and there's so much of it, and so many differing opinions and hot takes – people are really just looking for a signal among all that noise. We know that they're seeking the type of quality journalism that The New York Times provides, but paying for news is just something that they've never really considered.

An entire generation has grown up on



## The brief was, how do we drive subscriptions? How do we get people to fundamentally understand that news isn't free and it requires their support?

Nick Maschmeyer, Droga5

the ubiquity of the internet and digital resources, and there's an expectation of that ad-supported business model that is free, which we take for granted. The brief was, how do we drive subscriptions? How do we get people to fundamentally understand that news isn't free and it requires their support? It's almost an investment on their behalf to ensure its health and continuation.

### What were the business objectives?

To shift perceptions. We had key brand health metrics around 'The New York Times pursues the truth relentlessly', or 'The New York Times has a positive impact on the world', or, most importantly, 'The New York Times is worth paying for'. Key upticks in that are correlated with likeliness to subscribe, so there were some hard KPIs associated with the goal of the campaign. It was half cultural and half business, which is the case with anything we do. It was about showing what a subscription means.

### What was your initial response to this brief?

We're at The New York Times a lot and we've

talked to a lot of the journalists and they are very impressive people, really brilliant, intelligent, hard-working people. We thought about how we, as news consumers, consume news on mobile phones. There's a disconnect between the articles we get served up every single day and all the people and the time and investment and energy and depth that go into printing those words we read.

It's hard to see the connection between the two – that was the underlying insight into what we wanted to do. If you want people to value quality journalism you have to show them what they're supporting and what they're paying for.

### What is it about 'truth' in particular that makes this campaign so relevant and timely?

When you think about the context of what truth means, the news media landscape and industry as a whole is under threat, yet it's a foundation of our democracy, it's the First Amendment. It's never been more important for news organisations to hold power to account and report on what's happening in the world.

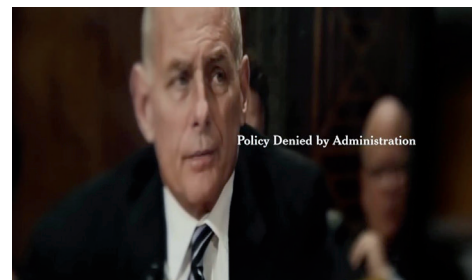




We say the word truth – meaning facts, analysis, reporting – but we see the truth as a catch-all proxy for quality journalism, specifically the sort of quality journalism that The New York Times provides. ‘The Truth Is Worth It’ is saying it’s worth it to us as an organisation to pursue and report and

publish, but also the truth, ie The New York Times, is worth paying for and it’s important to society.

**You mentioned that people are failing to distinguish between fact and opinion headlines. What other**



**research informed the direction of the campaign?**

There has been some recent research that shows that people don't necessarily understand what the various business models are of news organisations and where they get their revenues from, but that's just contextual. The New York Times takes a lot of pride in spending money and time on reporting and resources. They have desks all over the world, and send people to far-flung places to get the truth – they're not just sitting in a building in Times Square.

**Who would you say is the target audience of this campaign?**

It's The Times' readership, affectionately termed 'the curious reader'. Generally they are on the younger side, they're interested in the world around them. They are looking for quality journalism, it's an important pillar in their content consumption, as much as Netflix and Spotify are. However, there's a behavioural barrier to paying for news when they've grown up expecting it to be free.


**Could you tell me a bit more about the media plan you had in place to ensure the campaign continued to create noise?**

The two biggest things in the development of it were, one, how do we choose the topics, which articles and subject matter are we going to cover for these executions? We made a conscious decision to almost

engineer the cultural relevance, knowing that some of these cultural conversations around, say immigration or climate change are evergreen and ongoing conversations in a lot of ways, and have particular spikes in the news cycle. We placed these spots when those conversations were spiking, specifically around immigration. There's been news on that for what seems like every week, so we would swap in those particular executions for a heightened relevance during those conversations.

The second part of it was that there's a lot of digital media associated with this campaign. We really liked how the evolving headlines and the text type titles of the executions felt very suited to digital media placement. They are just as impactful with the sound off as they are in a digital banner or the spots themselves.

**Do you have any results you can share with us?**

We've seen a 6.8% improvement in those three brand health metrics that are associated with likeliness to pay, perception increases and subscription increases – NYT is leading among all digital news subscription-based organisations with 3 million subscribers. We've also seen a significant decrease in new subscriber acquisition costs, and in the past year, The New York Times' stock price has been outperforming competitor media and other platforms, which include News Corp, Alphabet, Spotify, Netflix and Facebook. 

# Raging Banners

Happiness Brussels creates rage-activated banners to promote telco Voo's internet service

**B**elgian telco Voo promoted its ultra-fast connections among gamers with voice-activated banners that were triggered when players raged against slow internet speeds.

Happiness Brussels developed for Voo a plug-in that connects to users' microphones and picks up what is said by the gamer.

As soon as the plug-in detected keywords relating to anger and the internet, an animated banner advertising Voo's speedy internet service was automatically displayed on the gamers' streams.

Voo got 20 gaming streamers, each of whom typically broadcast to audiences of over 100,000, to download this technology, to download the plug-in and then rage against their connection-lag, in order to broadcast the banners to their viewers.

## CONTAGIOUS INSIGHT /

**Problem to solution** / According to gaming research agency Newzoo, Belgium is home to 4.2 million active gamers. By targeting a pain point felt by these gamers – poor internet connectivity – and offering a



solution, the brand was able to exemplify the key benefits of its service at a key moment.

Voo has used a similar tactic before. In 2018, Contagious reported that the brand hijacked the buffering icon that appears when a video or web page is loading. Whenever a buffering wheel appeared, a message from Voo popped up promoting the speed of its internet service.

**Mass reach** / Voo relied on gaming platforms such as YouTube and Twitch to distribute its message. TechCrunch reported that YouTube's active gaming streamer base grew by 343%, and Twitch's by 197%, in 2017 alone. Meanwhile, a survey by Game Quitters found that 48% of gamers claim to spend more time watching gaming videos than they actually do playing them.

Voo was able to emphasise the value of its service to anyone watching the stream as they witnessed the fury of gamers, accompanied by Voo's enticing promise to fix the problem: a good demonstration of answering a need in front of a receptive audience. 🎮

## RESULTS / Happiness Brussels

reported that during the first five days of the campaign, 'Raging Banners' appeared on 78 different streams, reaching 3.8 million viewers, and visits to Voo's website doubled.



# Teddy Repair

Household cleaning brand Lysol offers teddy repairs to raise awareness of bacteria in children's toys, in this campaign from McCann New York

**T**o advertise its Laundry Sanitizer (which claims to kill 99.9% of bacteria) to parents, Lysol created a teddy hospital for children's stuffed toys.

The brand invited kids across the US to submit their stuffed toys for 'teddy repair' by visiting a website and uploading a picture of their toy along with a description of what needs fixing. Lysol then repaired, cleaned and sanitised 500 toys that had been 'loved to pieces' and were most in need of mending.

The toys were also fitted with an RFID (radio-frequency identification) bracelet to allow the children to track their toy during the repair process through their parents' phones.

Each time a toy moved to the next stage of the progress, its tracking bracelet was scanned and a photo was taken, and parents received a personalised update. Once the process was complete, Lysol posted the stuffed toys back to their owners.

## CONTAGIOUS INSIGHT /

For parents, as well as kids / Lysol's


toy-mending scheme helps kids but reaches parents, Lysol's intended audience. Lysol has taken a consumer pain point – the difficulty parents experience separating kids from their

stuffed animals in order to wash them – and eases the separation anxiety using tracking technology.

The strategy juxtaposes the scare-factor



(alerting parents to the prevalence of harmful bacteria on children's toys) with the cute-factor (taking care of toys and fixing their 'injuries') to position Lysol as a family-friendly brand, and bring focus to the USP of the product: a bacteria-killing sanitiser that is gentle on fabrics and 'specially designed to sanitise your family's clothes'.

**Shareable cleaning content /** Cleaning products are often viewed as a low-interest category, but through a combination of a clever insight, an abundance of hard work and a lot of attention to detail, Lysol is creating a wealth of shareable content about the power of its laundry detergent with this campaign. First of all, Lysol has promised to repair and sanitise 500 toys, but the brand is also doing the additional work of making each toy's journey trackable and sharing photographs of each child's stuffed toy doing things like sitting in a hospital waiting room environment or enjoying a 'teddy spa'. Each story has a ripple-on effect as users share them, each toy represents a new potential customer, and the submissions process doubles as a form of data collection, creating a ready-made audience for Lysol Laundry Sanitizer. 

**RESULTS /** According to the case study, the number of site visits to Lysol.com rose by 21% and Lysol Laundry Sanitizer sales increased by 52%.

# Kranavatn

The Brooklyn Brothers helps Iceland rebrand its tap water to encourage responsible tourism



Inspired by Iceland encouraged ecotourism by rebranding its public drinking water to Kranavatn, the Icelandic word for tap water.

The tourism board encouraged visitors to the country to take the 'Kranavatn Challenge' and visit the organisation's website to sign a pledge that they will be more responsible

with disposable plastics, such as water bottles, while travelling to the country. Challengers received a voucher for the same amount they would have spent on plastic water bottles, redeemable at several of the country's premier leisure and retail outlets.

As part of campaign, by The Brooklyn Brothers, London, the tourism board

partnered with several bars, restaurants and hotels in the country to offer Kranavatn as a new luxury drink. Inspired by Iceland also set up a Kranavatn bar at the airport to welcome visitors to the country and distributed branded goods to select influencers.

According to the agency, a study of 16,000 travellers from the US and Europe discovered that 65% of all travellers say they use more bottled water on vacation than they do at home, meanwhile 70% of all travellers say they don't trust tap water at foreign travel destinations.

The agency claims that Icelandic water is pure glacial water filtered through lava for thousands for years and one of the cleanest and best tasting waters in the world.

The campaign launched on 3 June and ran for three months, until August.


## CONTAGIOUS INSIGHT /

**Ecotourism communication** / This isn't the first time that we've seen Inspired by Iceland encourage responsible tourism. In 2016, we reported how the tourism board produced videos to teach visitors how to protect the country's natural beauty. Like the Kranavatn campaign, the tutorials were fun and light-hearted, enabling Inspired by Iceland to get a serious environmental message across without preaching.

We've been tracking how others have protected themselves from overtourism. For instance, the Faroe Islands closed its borders to visitors for a weekend of 'maintenance', during which time it invited

volunteers to help work on conservation projects. And Palau asked everyone to sign a pledge in their passports as soon as they arrived in the country.

Like Kranavatn, these campaigns encourage people to visit by painting a picturesque image, while also urging visitors to be responsible.

And according to a study conducted by Sustainable Travel International and Mandala Research, ecotourists tend to spend more and stay longer when travelling. They are also 63% more likely to consider destinations where protecting natural resources is an important part of the culture. This is generally a profitable, respectful demographic who will bring in the green, as well as help protect it in nature. 

**RESULTS** / According to the agency, the campaign video has accumulated 366,000 views across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube. With social media reach at 4 million over owned content, 1,333 mentions, 34,000 social engagements and 220,000 views from influencer content on Instagram. The Kranavatn Challenge has 2,370 organic sign-ups since launch and Inspired by Iceland's previous campaign, the Icelandic pledge, has now seen 70,000 sign-ups since 2017.



# Feast of Legends

VMLY&R helps Wendy's create a fantasy role-playing board game for fans

**U**S fast-food chain Wendy's has created a table-top board game where players battle it out in a magical, fast-food-themed fantasy world.

Feast of Legends is a parody of popular role-playing game Dungeons & Dragons, and it's filled with fast-food puns, tongue-in-cheek digs at competitors, and numerous references to Wendy's proposition of serving only fresh (never frozen) beef.

The game is set in the kingdom of Freshtovia, where Queen Wendy's prosperous reign is threatened by a villain known as the Ice Jester.

Feast of Legends was created by Wendy's long-time agency, VMLY&R, Kansas City and is explained in detail in a 97-page guide that is free to download.

Feast of Legends was launched at New York Comic Con in 2019 through a live-streamed tie-up with Critical Role, a web

series often credited with bringing role-playing games into the mainstream.

## CONTAGIOUS INSIGHT /

**Frozen out** / Wendy's role-playing game might seem left-field, but it fits the brand's strategy of finding creative ways to object to frozen meat, and communicating with a sassy personality and pop-culture savvy. Since the brand was created in 1969, Wendy's has promised its customers that its iconic square patties are made from fresh, never frozen beef.

'The great thing is that our strategy hasn't changed, we're just finding new ways of talking to a younger consumer group and remaining relevant,' said Carl Lored, Wendy's chief marketing officer, when Contagious interviewed him about the Keeping Fortnite Fresh campaign, where Wendy's avatar destroyed meat freezers within the video game Fortnite.



**Board game boom** / Wendy's activation taps into the resurgence of board games. Board games are making a comeback among families, kids, and even young adults, seeking more ways of socialising with friends face-to-face. Global sales of games and puzzles grew from \$9.3bn in 2013 to \$9.6bn in 2016. Meanwhile a report from market research firm Reportlinker forecast the value of the global board games market to reach \$12bn by 2023, growing at an annual rate of 9%.

The character creation, artistic illustrations, elaborate gameplay and detailed guide show that the brand put time and love in creating this game – something that board game



aficionados will no doubt appreciate. But even among those who don't play board games, Wendy's unexpected marketing move unveiled at New York Comic Con – an event that attracts more than 200,000 visitors per year – will have sparked discussion as well as media coverage. 📺

**RESULTS** / Following its launch in October, the guide had been downloaded nearly 250,000 times with more than 65,000 rolls of the digital dice on Wendy's website.

All the interviews in this report were taken from **Contagious I/O**, a fully searchable and constantly updated online tool featuring the most innovative examples of commercial creativity from around the world.

If you'd like to know more about equipping your team with Contagious I/O, get in touch with **[ollie@contagious.com](mailto:ollie@contagious.com)**

