

Bringing the Ultimate College Football Experience to the Fans--Nokia On the Road to #1

Category 15A Integrated Marketing Campaign, consumer products - Nokia with Ketchum Public Relations/ Atlanta

SITUATION:

Nokia, the world's largest manufacturer of mobile phones, had been title sponsor of the Sugar Bowl for four years. However, in 1999 it was feared that the record 45 bowl games and the new millennium would crowd Nokia's year-end messages. In addition, this year the Nokia Sugar Bowl 2000 (NSB) was the National Championship Game, making it even more imperative that Nokia maximize its presence to achieve full impact for the brand relative to the sponsorship cost. The challenge -- develop a program months before the bowl season begins with enough momentum to propel messages through the "new millennium" and dramatically impact Nokia's sponsorship awareness.

ABC's advertising for the run-up to the Bowl Championship Series and the NSB featured two guys in a RV: "On the Road with ABC." Ketchum advised Nokia to extend that theme by inventing the NOKIA FAN VAN—an interactive mobile marketing program which would visit college football games and retail locations nationally, meet the fans, offer them sweepstakes prizes and get them excited about Nokia's National Championship game in New Orleans. By creating the *ultimate football experience*, Nokia would build the brand by connecting Nokia with college football fans.

From September – December 1999, Ketchum, in a collaborative effort with other Omnicom agencies, "kicked-off" the multi-tiered program featuring five Fan Vans to visit more than 50 colleges and 118 retail locations; an in-box phone sales sweepstakes; and a Ketchum-designed web site to link the entire program and messaging together. To combat the year-end bowl game/millennium frenzy, a half-time component was developed that paired a common man with legendary football hero Joe Theismann and a chance to win \$2 million. The program broke through millennium clutter, further positioned the company and scored for Nokia with a combination that proved to be Nokia's largest and most successful integrated marketing program to date.

RESEARCH:

Nokia conducts ongoing research to measure brand impact on various consumer levels. Previous measurements established benchmarks on areas to impact. Company information remains confidential but revealed the following:

- Company confidential research has proven the loyalty among fans of NASCAR, college football and country music. Sponsorship of the Sugar Bowl began in 1995 when Nokia's brand awareness was low in the US. **With the contract up for review, Nokia needed to dramatically impact awareness ratings to justify internally any further sponsorship contract negotiations.**
- ABC marketing indicated Neilson Rankings from previous year's games to be average or below. **It was determined that because this was a Championship game year, rankings would most certainly be higher but Y2K could impact results.**
- The internet was identified as one of the best ways to reach the college market and alumni nationally. **Ketchum secured a new URL site with a recognizable address for the sweepstakes and the championship year. The address nokiasugarbowl2000.com was researched as available, secured and tagged for the program.**
- Many loyal college football fans travel from game to game. **Ketchum identified that the RV concept would play to their passion for the sport. And a sweepstakes program based around phone sales would reward fans with prizes, including the RVs.**
- Nokia research identified that the link between college football and college fans is emotional. A half-time toss would bring an emotional level to the game for viewers who may not care about the teams playing. Media monitoring and an informal poll determined a proper talent partner for the show to add excitement and offer pre-event celebrity appearances. **Joe Theismann was chosen, based on financial and personality/popularity reasons revealed in the research.**

PLANNING:

Ketchum directed the structure of the program and integrated all communication efforts from the web site to tactic execution. GMR provided scheduling and logistics for the fan vans and The Marketing Arm developed the POP, sweepstakes elements and advertising. Recognizing that the common goal would be increased consumer awareness and a measurable benchmark, the team identified all possible avenues to deliver consistent messaging from POP, to fan van, to web site to support the Nokia brand.

Audiences: Sports & lifestyle editors to reach consumers-ages 18-65; Retailers & Carrier Partners (indirectly)
Program Objectives:

- Maximize exposure to the Nokia brand and increase consumer awareness and create associations between audiences to incite brand awareness and position Nokia as a top company

- Drive marketing/sales efforts by promoting the web site/sweepstakes program and retail locations (RV tour)

Strategy:

- Build visibility for Nokia both before, during, and after the Sugar Bowl by generating activity on the web site, publicity in grassroots markets for the fan vans, and national awareness of the halftime-toss
- Position Nokia as owning the largest college sporting event of the new millennium
- Fully integrate program elements with multiple marketing channels in the top college football markets

Budget:

RV- purchase, graphics, staffing, planning, travel costs: \$600,000 - Public Relations Support \$300,000
Web Site development and maintenance: \$94,000 - Advertising including POP, radio, logo graphics, etc. \$850,000

EXECUTION:

RV PROGRAM: Planning began in June with aggressive media relations from September 3 through November 30 to support RV appearances in **48 markets with 3 college bowl appearances and 188 retail stops**. The five Nokia Fan Vans were fully decked-out mobile marketing vehicles with interactive games that brought people into contact with Nokia. Ketchum worked with local and national sports and lifestyle reporters to drive traffic to and awareness of the vans. Ketchum attended 26 game day visits and eight retail stops in three months. RV drivers contribute to media messages with on-the-road interviews in market. In December, the Fan Vans were the featured attraction at pep rallies at Florida State and Virginia Tech -- schools playing in the bowl game.

THE WEB SITE: The web site was launched with the RV program and logged record numbers throughout the fall. In addition to providing sweepstakes information-gathering entries, the site offered fans the chance to vote for their favorite team, check weekly game times and RV locations and gather tailgating recipes. In December a splash page on the web site offered congratulations to the selected teams and a countdown to game time in New Orleans.

HALF-TIME TOSS: In December 1999, the momentum switched to the half-time promotion. Ketchum and Nokia announced the program through former NFL quarterback, Joe Theismann. The scenario: a chance for a "common man," Bob Moderhak of Florida (chosen for the competition by Nokia's partner Sprint), to win up to \$2 million with the help of talented player. Visits to *Fox & Friends* and *Regis & Kathie Lee* provided more than an hour's worth of national media exposure. Ketchum promoted Moderhak in his hometown of Longmont, Co., and Tampa, Fla., where he now lives. Just prior to the change of the new millennium, Theismann made an additional appearance on the *Tonight Show with Jay Leno* --at no additional charge. A press conference in New Orleans introduced the contestant to the media in town for the game. On Jan. 4, with a record crowd at the New Orleans Superdome, Moderhak threw a successful pass making him half a million richer. Ketchum, watching in the press box, distributed a media alert and quote sheet and secured both national television and radio interviews that night and beginning again early the next day.

EVALUATION:

Maximize exposure to the Nokia brand and increase consumer awareness and create associations between audiences to incite brand awareness and position Nokia as a top company.

- Nokia's URL was displayed on five fan vans, 5 hours of media appearances, including Theismann interviews.
- In less than four months, **500,000 visitors from all 50 states** and 20 countries visited the web site.
- Generated more than **10.5 million Fan Van grassroots media impressions** in some of the most passionate college football markets nationwide lasting **throughout football season**.
- Media embraced the additional angle of a contestant who could win \$2 million as a reprieve to standard football messages generating more than **156 million impressions** for the **Nokia \$2 Million Challenge** including: Regis & Kathie Lee, Fox & Friends, Good Day Tampa Bay, and The Tonight Show with Jay Leno, Sports Illustrated.com – BEFORE- and USA Today, CNN, Good Morning America and Inside Edition and various other print and local broadcasts–AFTER.
- **Awareness of Nokia's Sponsorship of the Nokia Sugar Bowl increased 26 percent Aug '99 to December '99**
- Nokia's van and URL secured additional exposure as a tag spot in ads on ABC and ESPN.
- Set attendance records logging largest audience in the history of the Sugar Bowl – 79,280 fans
- Estimated **\$47.8 million worth of logo exposure** for Nokia from RV tour to National Game

Drive marketing and sales efforts through web site/sweepstakes program and grass roots retail locations

- Sales results proved the Fan Van appearance with increased store traffic more than **70 percent SOLD OUT - More than 6 million sweepstakes-marked boxes sold September - December**.
- More than **235,000 on-line sweepstakes entries** to the web site.
- Of the half a million entries on the web, **235,000 submitted personal data**, captured for future marketing.
- More than **285,000 calls** were placed to the toll-free sweepstakes entry number and Nokia received more than **10,000 mailed post card entries**. –(several local TV spots also posted sweepstakes mailing information.)
- Presentations to the vendors in early June sold the program **More than 2,000 retailers recognized the benefits and displayed in-store POP from Sept. through Dec. 1999**.

*With the help of Ketchum and Omnicom partners,
Nokia successfully completed its largest integrated grass roots marketing program to date.*

