
Insignia Case Study

In August, 2008, I worked with the Insignia business unit of Best Buy to develop an awareness campaign for Best Buy's private label, specifically for home theater components. Inside you'll find the work that went into that campaign and the results.



Does promoting a new Sony HDTV on a Panasonic HDTV in a home theater department really have impact? Does using broadcast commercials repurposed for an in-store environment capture the attention of the shopper? The answer to both is no.

Shoppers control their time in a retail environment, and have the power to deselect, or filter out, the obtrusive messaging to get to what they want. This often puts brands on the offensive to outdo their competition for the attention of the shopper. The less the content looks and feels like it belongs in the environment, the easier it is for the customer to ignore it.

What if content was produced to work in a unique store environment? What impact would that have on the customer?



THE CHALLENGE

Insignia is Best Buy's private label product line of consumer electronics, ranging from HDTVs to two-way radios. Insignia believes it is a brand by the people and for the people, focusing on how customers use products, not necessarily the products themselves. The strategy of differentiation for Insignia is lifestyle aspiration. The emotional connection is the family on the couch, eating popcorn, and watching a favorite show or movie, not hanging a TV on a wall, sipping champagne, and talking about its black beveled frame.

Insignia wanted to move beyond the general retail "house brand" stigma of lower quality compared to the high-tier brands with which they shared shelf space. It wanted to generate buzz among the retail space about its brand proposition and economical value to the price-conscious consumer.

In 2008, while managing the in-store media network with Best Buy, I was approached by Insignia with a desire to create messaging that increased brand awareness and product sales. Executing a digital campaign strategy based on customer research and brand value would give us tremendous insight on the impact of the media network, and it would prove whether or not we, a retailer, could do better than external brands in creating content that grabbed the customer's attention and enabled the path to purchase.

Because Best Buy owns the network and the Insignia brand, it would have been easy to just kick competitors out of the space and give more time to Insignia. But, frequency does not always mean more sales. Instead, I wanted to ensure that the content itself had impact.

THE EXECUTION

I gathered members from the Insignia team and Best Buy's internal production team, Yellow Tag, and conducted a focus group to learn how I could match the desires of Insignia's brand proposition with the network's content strategy and creation guidelines.

We reviewed ads from Insignia's competitors airing on the program and examined the message styles, trying to understand how the message connected with the customer. One brand showed how its TV hanging on the wall was art itself. Another brand showed how close you could get to sports action – so close, in fact, that you would see game action with camera angles never invented. Another brand presented a dance troupe with each dancer holding an HDTV in a mosaic fashion to show images that were larger than a single screen could hold. All ads were 30-second broadcast ads; none were custom created for the in-store network.

The review provided perspective on what worked and what failed in terms of compelling content. From that, a two-step advertising strategy was developed. The first step was to create an ad that generated brand awareness. The second ad would focus on lifestyle aspiration.

The first ad's running time is 31 seconds and it is completely visual, with audio complementary to the message. If the audio is not accessible (the TV audio is turned down or the viewer is standing outside the range of the audio), the viewer still gets the entire message. The ad shows several home environments with Insignia products. You see copy designed to generate a relationship between the customer and Insignia: "You Live." "You Evolve." "We Listen." "Let Your Life Evolve." The spot focused on HDTVs, but included a Blu-ray DVD player and receiver to show the complete equation for home theater (Figure 1).



Figure 1

I planned the first ad's frequency based on the dwell time of the customer in the department, an average of 8.5 minutes. Over the hour-long program, the ad ran about every 10 to 12 minutes for the highest exposure possible.

Interestingly, all other brands have this opportunity as well. However, most choose not to pay for that frequency, opting for a frequency of two or three times per hour.

The ad ran for four weeks in Best Buy starting in August 2008. In the middle of September, I got feedback from the stores that Insignia HDTVs were selling well. I asked Best Buy's internal research team for sales numbers on six randomly selected HDTV models. I didn't know what specific models were selling.

THE RESULTS

The results were impressive. Between August and September of 2008, Insignia's 47" 1080p LCD model saw a sales increase of 149 percent. The 37" 1080p LCD increased 116 percent. The 50" 1080p Plasma went up 69 percent. Every one of the models I selected that Insignia sold at the time saw an increase in sales, including Insignia's 720p Plasma, which had seen two previous months of decreasing sales. (Figure 2.)

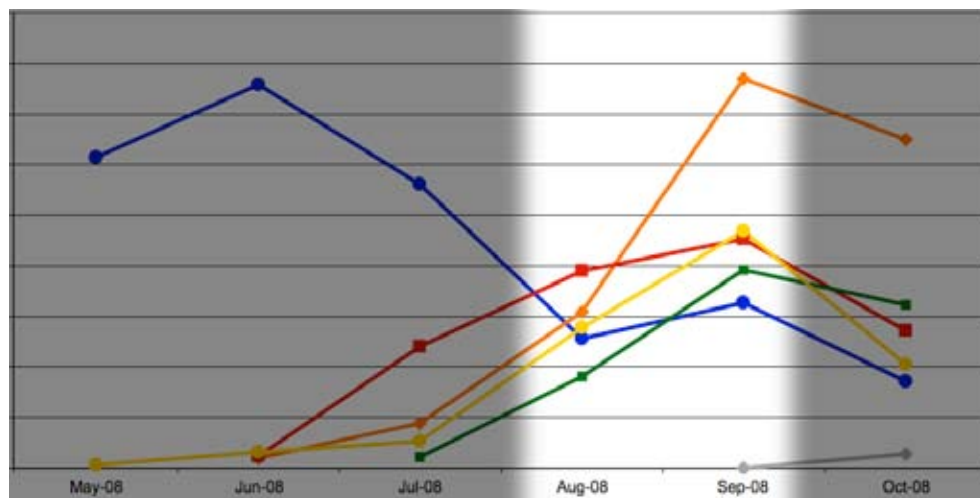


Figure 2
All six models I researched saw a sales increase. The 47" 1080p LCD (Orange) jumped 149% during the campaign.

THE KEY TAKEAWAYS

The key takeaways relate strongly to the factors considered when developing the content. The combination of customer knowledge, brand proposition, high production value, and frequency gave the in-store network the power to engage the viewer. Insignia focused on aspiration, showing where a customer could be with the product in his or her life. The ads were very different from other HDTV promotions on the program, separating Insignia from the pack.

One of the most important factors was that the spot was created specifically for the in-store media network. Complementing the environment supports the philosophy that custom, relevant, and compelling content can enhance the shopping experience.

The end result was a very successful campaign and a new way of thinking about customer engagement with digital signage. The success of the ad forced Best Buy and many merchant teams to rethink their partnerships with vendors and how products and services are promoted in the retail environment. Repurposed broadcast commercials won't engage a customer; telling a better story about the benefit of a product in a customer's life has more impact than just pitching the product.

The success of the Insignia campaign provided baseline knowledge for Best Buy's practices with customer engagement through digital media channels.

