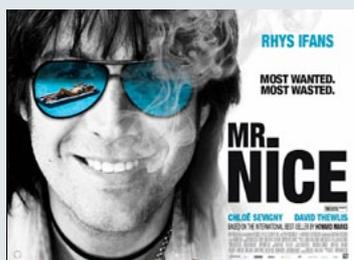


DIGITAL INNOVATION IN DISTRIBUTION

Case study

Mr. Nice

Distributor: **Entertainment One UK** Release Date: **8th October 2010**



During the mid 1980s Howard Marks had 43 aliases, eighty-nine phone lines and owned twenty five companies trading throughout the world.

At the height of his career he was smuggling consignments of up to 30 tons of marijuana and had contact with organisations as diverse as MI6,

the CIA, the IRA and the Mafia.

Following a worldwide operation by the drugs enforcement agency, he was busted and sentenced to 25 years in prison at Terre Haute Penitentiary, Indiana. He was released in 1995 after serving seven years of his sentence.

Marks' account of his exploits, in his phenomenally successful biography, is the basis for *Mr. Nice*.

Target audiences

The primary target audience for *Mr. Nice* is 16 – 24 year old males including students. Key themes or hooks of interest include Howard Marks, the underground culture outlined in the film, the best-selling book, the music and soundtrack, the strong talent in the film, the autobiographical drugs-based storyline, and the extraordinary true stories.

The secondary audience is 25+ year old ABC1 males who are fans of the best-selling book and who may already be fans of Howard Marks; the hooks outlined above will also appeal to this audience.

Plan to reach the target audience using online tools

The campaign was launched four months prior to the theatrical release of the movie, in order to create awareness during the summer and target the *Mr. Nice* festival goer audience.

To start the campaign, the movie was the official sponsor of the Q Glasnorbury Festival Guide handed on site to over 100,000 festival goers.

Online, the central campaign initiative was to have users work for Mr. Nice across the summer by smuggling 'packages' across the internet. Users visiting partner sites were 'cookie'd' and encouraged to go to the *Mr. Nice* site to enter a competition: 'working' for Mr. Nice to win a round-the-world trip. On visiting the *Mr. Nice* site users who had picked up this cookie were greeted with a message saying they had successfully delivered a package and were prompted to sign up to enter the competition.

Four editorial features ran on partners sites (FHM, NME, Vice and Nuts)



Project Costs	Cost
Central campaign website build inc. package smuggling game set up	£8,000
Launch activity inc. trailer syndication and cookie drop on IGN	£1,500
Festival guide with FHM plus cookie drop inc. innovative media placements	£5,000
'Well rough guide' with Nuts plus cookie drop and homepage sponsorship	£4,000
iPhone Alias App	£5,000
Bespoke 'When Rhys met Howard' featurette on Vice and video MPU	£2,000
Further exclusive media placements of content and featurette on MSN, YouTube, Studento, Shortlist and more	£5,000
Distributor contribution	(£500)
TOTAL	£30,000

across four months and users had to visit each feature to collect a new package (a digital cookie) to progress in the competition. They then had to return to the official site to 'deliver' the cookie.

This campaign was both editorial and display media led. Each partner sites' editorial team agreed to host a piece of bespoke content produced by the creative and content agency and to keep it live for up to four months.

The complex implementation was stress free for the sites as all technical development was taken care of in the backend by the creative agency who delivered the content to the sites as a simple piece of code to host. This also ensured the perfect implementation of the pixel.

Each piece of content was also supported by display media and a search campaign ran across the summer. We saw the number of terms related to the movie and actors increase as the campaign was deployed.

Closer to the release date, the TV, Outdoor and press campaigns kicked in and on the release day we had Home Page Takeovers on three of our partner's sites: NME, Nuts and Vice.

As an additional point of engagement, an interactive Mr. Nice iPhone application was available to download (1,134 downloads). The application downloads were boosted by a mobile campaign targeted to iPhone users.

Implementing the campaign

Content syndication with multiple partners was always going to be a challenge. The editorial and sales team of each site welcomed the campaign as a great initiative and the only point requiring additional discussion was with IPC (owner of Nuts) who were initially reluctant to have their main competitor FHM, also part of the mechanic.

The media spend allocated to each partner to support the campaign was used as a point of leverage in our negotiations with IPC who ultimately accepted to run the campaign as planned.

The campaign started early but visibility through the summer was key to engaging with our core audience. The increase in search terms related to the movie and actors during the summer show the awareness of the movie was increasing as the campaign was deployed.

The most challenging aspect of the activity was keeping the momentum and maintaining users' interest for over four months until the release and the technical implementation of the pixel.

Evaluation

eOne consider that having bespoke features tailored to the sites' audience was a great success. FHM worked particularly well: the editorial team loved the content and gave it a lot of free editorial mention. The NME feature also had a good level of traffic, but Nuts only gave a minimum support due to their reluctance to have FHM part of the mechanic.

Unfortunately the campaign did not include a method for directly measuring the impact of the online campaign on the performance of the release. However the tracking system shows that the display campaign reached over 2.2m unique users and an additional 1k users downloaded the application. The search campaign drove 11,400 clicks and a total of 39,976 clicks were generated by the display media (inc. search). eOne feel that these are particularly strong results for the budget allocated.

They believe that the level of engagement show the campaign reached the right audience. With a limited budget for this release they had to make it work hard.

Cookies explained

Cookies are small text files that are saved by internet browsers. They are used to track internet sessions and visitors.

Often they are used for maintaining data across a visit, for example ensuring that items placed in a shopping cart are remembered until checkout.

They are also used for collecting site usage statistics, and to monitor websites visited, for the purposes of targeting advertising.

In the Mr. Nice campaign, a cookie was saved during the visit to the featurettes on partner websites. This cookie was then 'smuggled' back to the Mr. Nice website, which would check for the presence of this cookie.



Featurette on www.nme.com



Featurette on www.nuts.co.uk



The game on the official Mr. Nice website (www.mrnice-themovie.co.uk)

If bought as part of a display campaign, the editorial features would have been very expensive but in this case they were hosted for free by the sites. eOne therefore achieved an high level of added value for a minimum spend (the support campaign running during the summer for four months only required minimal media budget).

Conclusion

The content syndication and the cookie technology were not only creative and innovative ideas but eOne also believe that they delivered results. They consider the process to have been very smooth which they attribute to the high level of preparation and coordination.

The features were also planned early enough to include some bespoke introductions recorded during an interview with Howard Marks. They would definitely look to repeat this level of forward planning in future campaigns.

One area in which they did encounter problems was in dealing with multiple conflicting partners. Having earlier discussions and greater transparency with all the partners may have made this part smoother.

In the end, aside from creating overall awareness of the title, the campaign resulted in 2,141 users entering the competition with nearly half opting-in to be re-contacted for future releases.

The use of the cookie-smuggling dynamic also means that a retargeting pixel from the Contextweb network was implemented on the official site, which eOne will be able to use for the DVD release, to retarget users identified as having visited the Mr. Nice site.

Website statistics (www.mrnice-themovie.co.uk)

Total Site Visits	86,982
Unique users	67,945
Proportion of unique visits	78%
iPhone app downloads	1,134
Trailers viewed on official site	11,745
Total trailer views across campaign	320,000

Game plays

Total registrants	2,141
Players who completed all four challenges	605
Number of email opt-ins	958

Traffic to featurettes on partner websites

FHM feature	4,512
NME feature	3,200
Vice feature	2,783
Nuts feature	1,329
Total feature traffic	11,824