



Posted by AT&T and MTV Networks Music Sites

Business Situation

Developing a Socially Driven Music Experience

Our challenge was building on the prior year's successful MTV/AT&T initiative "The Vault", which featured popular archived content from top artists that was 'unlocked' at various points throughout the campaign. As one of the more successful music franchises to date, the push was to keep the momentum going and continue to build top-of-mind awareness, brand perception and favorability among youth while leveraging the "lifestreaming" tendencies of this audience.

Our approach centered on giving our shared fans even more of what they love – more artist access. Together, AT&T and MTV Music enabled fans to get even closer to the artists and their music via lifestreaming, and together we programmed the experience to drive social and viral conversation, solidifying the effort as a true music franchise for our courtesy of AT&T.

Campaign Description

Posted: How It Works

The solution was Posted, a multi-site music franchise that turned content into conversation. Posted featured a total of 12 artists across the 4 month promotion between June-September 2010. Each month a different artist was selected as the Posted artist of the month and featured on one of the MTV Music sites – MTV.com, Vh1.com and CMT.com. Unlike the Vault, which drove to a separate micro-site where new content was 'unlocked' periodically, Posted content was fully integrated into each of the MTV Music sites and kept fresh with daily artist updates. Armed with an AT&T Motorola Backflip phone, the artists provided daily updates that included photos from the road, news updates, blog posts, live performances, interviews, tour updates, and Facebook and Twitter updates.

This lifestreaming content was integrated with the artist's content from other existing MTV Music site franchises on each of the sites. In addition to co-branded ads, the Posted franchise pulled in AT&T's new branding scheme, colors and design. Each site's Posted pages also provided links to the other Music Sites Posted artists making the franchise a truly cross-site initiative.

All of the content was highly shareable to a variety of social media outlets via widgets that allowed fans to instantly retweet content or post it directly to their Facebook pages.

As part of a robust social media plan, Posted content was promoted on each of the MTV Music brands Facebook and Twitter pages with regular updates throughout the course of the campaign including full sponsorship integration for AT&T Posted. Each Posted artist also promoted the franchise on their official sites, fansites, and Facebook, MySpace and Twitter pages.

Posted saw heavy site editorial promotion on each of the Music sites and AddictingGames.com with promo pods and regular news, blogs, homepage and artists' page updates. Each brand featured the sites corresponding Posted artist in regular music newsletters on the AT&T Posted franchise and the artists. The co-branded units fully integrated AT&T branding into targeted, contextually relevant units. There was also a mobile component to the campaign on MTV, Vh1 and CMT WAP sites which featured AT&T branding Posted.

MTV Networks and AT&T launched a targeted press strategy at the outset of the campaign to industry outlets such as MediaWeek, Billboard and AdWeek, and to consumer and artist focus channels.

Research Story& Business Results

Posted: Research History

At the outset of the program, MTV Networks reviewed the success of The Vault initiative and tapped into findings from other sponsored music franchises. Two key factors were identified as critical to franchise success – site integration to leverage scale as opposed to micro-site focused approach and shareability to allow fans to consume and share content where they already were doing so.

Past campaigns showed that by activating the most social fans, these word of mouth visitors can be tapped as brand ambassadors to drive increased traffic back to the branded franchise. As a result, the Posted campaign was designed not only to be a cross-site seamless integration into MTV Music's existing sites, but also featured artists already highly active in the social space with a social fan following.

Posted: Measurement Deconstructed - Methodology

In order to prove this multi-element approach would grow a music franchise, MTV Networks put a two-pronged tracking mechanism into place to monitor the Posted campaign's collective scale and earned media. In addition to traditional Omniture tracking on each of the MTV Music sites, Posted was measured collectively across all MTV Music sites. MTV Networks also commissioned Meteor Solutions to track word of mouth traffic driven to the Posted due to shared content.

Posted: Success – Site Integration & Scale

Posted was a resounding success and site integration and shareable content proved key to that success. In total, 2.4 million fans visited the franchise 3 million times, consuming over 5.2 million pages of content and streaming 3.4 million videos. Time spent with the Posted franchise was off the charts as fans spent an astonishing 40 million minutes with content – that's over 76 years! And while the prior year's AT&T Vault initiative was deemed very successful, after just 3 weeks, Posted video streams had surpassed all streams from entire The Vault campaign by more than 60%. By Week 3, Posted usage minutes outpaced The Vault and by Week 5, Posted shattered the Vault's totals in page views and visits.

Beyond benchmarks to The Vault, Posted's scale was unparalleled for a music franchise. Posted netted 50% more streams than other MTV Music cross-site franchises in two-thirds the time. Posted also proved a music based franchise could be as successful non-music initiatives,

and tallied as many or more streams and uniques than key tentpole and series franchises on all three of the MTV Music websites.

A key factor in Posted's overall success was that it was a consistent success. In fact, every week, streams, page views, and usage minutes outpaced the corresponding week of the Vault campaign, and all but the first week of Posted averaged more uniques visitors the Vault's full campaign average.

While some artists, such as Adam Lambert (June Vh1 Posted artist), boosted the franchise with an extremely active social fan base, no one artist drove Posted's overall success. Each month saw more unique fans than the last – growing 74% between June and September. Engagement also grew over the life of the campaign in a big way. Starting at an already high 9 minutes in Week 1, Posted fans averaged over 18 minutes per visit by mid-September. Keep in mind this was a music based franchise and thus the time spent averages are particularly high given the nature of the content (music videos/clips vs. full episodes).

Posted fans just couldn't get enough of their favorite artists and more than one-quarter of fans came back to the sites during the course of the campaign with more 80% of those fans returning the within one week. Posted also became an extremely top of mind destination with over 50% of fans arriving via a typed or bookmarked link. Plus, Posted's success extended to mobile which saw nearly 200,000 mobile views and more than 18,000 mobile streams.

Posted: Success – Social & Viral

The second key to Posted success was social. In total, the campaign yielded nearly 22 million Facebook impressions via updates on the Music brands Facebook pages alone (MTV, Vh1 and CMT only), nearly 25,000 likes and more than 3,600 comments. This does not take into account AT&T Posted updates shared by fans on their private Facebook pages. As part of the social media plan, there were more than 180 MTV, Vh1 and CMT tweets for AT&T Posted content, which saw 1,600 retweets and more than 36,000 clicks.

Perhaps the greatest factor in Posted's success was the shareable nature of content and the impact highly social fans had on building this new franchises' popularity. The top three external referring domains included Google, Facebook and Twitter reflecting the impact of a strong SEO strategy, social media plan, and socially engaged artists and fans. Social networks' Facebook and Twitter played a big role and drove over 10% of external referrals.

Posted was specifically designed to be more social than traditional series based franchises, and we saw a nearly tenfold increase in the virality of content. Overall, Posted content became incredibly viral with 12% of Posted's 3.4 million streams virally streamed on more than 2,100 website; Facebook alone accounted for 10% of viral streaming.

Posted's shareable content also delivered a unique social experience. As measured by the earned media study, nearly 13% of the Posted 2.4 million fans came due to shared content (i.e. word of mouth traffic). This means, more than one in ten of Posted fans arrived at the site via a link shared on a social network, blog, fansite, artists page, newsletter or elsewhere.

Via the Meteor tracking, we were able to identify how word of mouth traffic arrived at the sites. Artist, fan and social networking sites were instrumental in driving direct (first level) word of mouth traffic back to Posted. Nearly two-thirds of traffic from the artists and fan sites were word of mouth and just under half of traffic from social networks and blogs was due to shared content. However, it was email that showed the highest multi-generational word of mouth lift (i.e. Email > Facebook > Blog > Posted).

Earned media tracking also allowed identification of which types of content drove word of mouth traffic. We saw variation by artist and site allowing mid campaign optimization and learnings for future campaigns. For example, photos were more successful in driving word of mouth traffic on some sites, while blog postings yielded more visitors due to sharing in other cases. In fact, one key example showed how a single shared link to an MTV blog drove over 24,000 multigenerational word of mouth visitors back to Posted across multiple Posted artists.

Posted: Takeaways for Future Campaigns

As a result of the cohesive research plan, MTV Networks was able to conclude that Posted met and exceeded its original goal of growing a music based franchise with full sponsorships integration. By integrating fully into the existing franchises, Posted was able to leverage the scale of the MTV Music sites. Tracking earned media allowed us to measure the success of the editorial, search and social media plans by tapping into the sharing habits of Posted fans. The net learning was that each element of this campaign converged to drive strong engagement on MTV Music sites and on other channels where the content was shared.

These findings reinforce that shareable content can be effective in driving return traffic to the website and is a viable means of growing a brand and franchise in places where fans choose to consume content. In a marketplace where advertisers are consistently pushing to leverage social networks, AT&T Posted proved this can be done in an organic and altruistic way where fans are actually engaging with branded content on social media channels.