

**GOLD, Sports, Media & Entertainment**

**SILVER, Food & Beverage**

**Campaign Title:** Budweiser FIFA World Cup Campaign

**Year the campaign took place:** 2018



**Brand:** Budweiser

**Creative Agency:** Anomaly

**Media Company/Agency:** Brand Genetics

**Research Company:** Ipsos

**Additional Affiliated Companies:** ABI, Winnin

**Summary of the marketing challenge, methodology, insight discovered, creative execution and business impact.**

**Marketing Challenge:** How to champion Budweiser's dream of bringing people together while energizing and inspiring football fans watching the World Cup.

**Methodology:** Qualitative research leveraging in-depth interviews, ethnographies, focus groups, online communities.

Quantitative research to understand conscious and nonconscious reactions to creative assets



Software Intelligence to understand video consumption

**Creative:** Creative videos rolled out across the world on TV and Digital platforms. In addition, noise-activated light-up cups were distributed in all World Cup stadiums. Finally, strong activations occurred on Twitter and other platforms driving the #reactionchallenge

**Business Impact:** Budweiser became the most discussed brand during the event, beating out Adidas, Coca-Cola, Nike and Apple. In addition, brand awareness was increased and sales went up 4.1% globally

## CONSUMER INSIGHT

World Cup insight:

“The world cup is four extra-ordinary weeks, you can feel the extra energy in the air, people feel more excited and more free to have fun.”

## MARKETING CHALLENGE

Miguel Patricio, global CMO of Anheuser-Busch InBev at the time, said the campaign aimed to champion Budweiser’s dream of bringing people together while energizing and inspiring football fans watching the World Cup.

After the Sab Miller acquisition, the Budweiser brand presented different levels of penetration around the globe and aimed to drive brand saliency and be a catalyst to elevate the World Cup experience for fans around the world.

“Our job as a premium beer brand (was) to make an event like this more fun, more celebratory and more social. Our whole campaign (was) centered around this sense of euphoric energy around the world and our call to action is to light up the FIFA World Cup,” Brian Perkins, Budweiser’s global marketing VP at the time.

As such, Budweiser had the challenge of breaking through in the context of one of the largest sports events in the world while leveraging one

consistent campaign that would be effective across different markets.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Phase 0: Insight Development**

Research began in 2016 with qualitative work involving expert interviews including coaches, professional players, journalists, club and national officials as well as consumers. Consumer work involved video blogging, ethnographies, and focus group discussions. Work was done across six key markets including the US, UK, Russia, Brazil, Spain, and Vietnam. This research aimed to discover insight territories for the Budweiser brand in football.

### **Phase 1: Understanding the power of and refining the Big Idea**

Exploratory groups were held in China, Brazil, the US, and UK to evaluate and screen four different creative directions to qualitatively assess each, highlighting key communication drivers and barriers, providing strategic recommendations and offering optimization direction.

Online Communities were leveraged to understand the power of the Big Idea. Here we gauged level of relevance, engagement, differentiation and brand fit, in addition to more emotional reactions to the concept. Participants also provided personal images related to how they connect with football to help the team bring the idea to life in way consumers would realistically connect with. Media channels were also discussed, and a space for co-creation allowed for further insight as to the possibilities related to specific activations. Work was executed in the UK, Russia, China and Brazil.

### **Phase 2: Creative Assessment**

Qualitative Research was executed to provide understanding about consumer reactions when exposed to the early stage creative execution

to guide the creative agency. Guardrails were identified as well as opportunities for optimization. Qualitative work was executed in the UK, RSA, China and Brazil.

Quantitative research was deployed leveraging Ipsos’ ASI:Check design. The goal was to understand the potential of rough versions of the ideas in video format and identify opportunities to optimize. Deeper diagnostics were discovered leveraging non-conscious data with facial coding. Learnings provided guardrails to consider in terms of country specific reactions to the global campaign and what needed to be adjusted for local deployment. Research was done in the UK, RSA, China and Brazil. Research indicated the video executions had strong potential to breakthrough in the markets and drive interest in Budweiser.



Partnership with a data driven entertainment company to understand video consumption in 17 markets. Data indicated that Budweiser’s best-performing content was connected with real-time conversations, and reaction videos were widely popular, specially so at cultural events, like the FIFA World Cup. This spurred the #reactionchallenge for Budweiser. Data also helped the team identify key influencers across 20+ countries

## **CREATIVE EXECUTION**

The campaign featured a video of drones carrying Budweiser from its Brewery in St. Louis, Missouri (US) to World Cup watching parties, from Shanghai to Rio de Janeiro, and to Luzhniki Stadium in Moscow. Video was deployed in 15, 30 and 90 second formats for TV and social media. In addition to this, Budweiser released more than 8 million cups which lit up during moments of loud crowd noise during the games. The cups picked up changes in decibels, for instance if fans are cheering or clapping the cup will light up accordingly.

Cups were sent to 12 different stadiums in Russia. Each cup depicted the match at which the beer was consumed. In addition to elevating the spirit during the game, they made for great souvenirs for the fans.

In addition, Anheuser-Busch collaborated with Twitter to develop a voting method for the Budweiser Man of the Match and launched a sound-activated Sanpchat lense that mirrored the functionality of the Light Up Cups.

Budweiser also produced some cups that vibrated to allow for blind soccer fans to join the fun.

"We had a team on the ground in Moscow operating 24/7 including social listening to capture consumer insights, football expertise from partner publishers, creative and production teams, and media buying. We also set up other satellite teams around the world to support and offer regional expertise in Shanghai, London and New York."- Brian Perkins, Budweiser's global marketing VP at the time.

Other local activations included collectable world cup bottles in China and the pledge to give England fans free beer in the event of the team winning.



The #reactionchallenge for Budweiser was also launched on social media, coupled with key influencers driving conversations for the brand and the World Cup across 20+ countries.

“This is a fun energetic story, in delivering beer and energy in an elevated and unexpected way. It’s the most epic beer delivery of all time,” said Brian Perkins.

## **BUSINESS RESULTS/LESSONS LEARNED**

As a result, Budweiser increased in awareness around the world. [Twitter revealed](#) that over the course of the tournament, the AB InBev lager was the most discussed brand, with 637,925, beating out Adidas, Coca-Cola, Nike and Apple.

The #reactionchallenge generated over 200M views and 139M earned views. The brand earned top number of impressions for the event.

“AB InBev reported a strong performance for Budweiser in its results for the first half of 2018, ..., with sales up 4.1% globally, but up 10.1% after excluding the US, where it is in decline after dominating beer sales for years. The business as a whole recorded organic revenue growth of 4.7% year-on-year.

In the UK, meanwhile, Budweiser has become the second biggest-selling beer brand in shops, after Stella Artois, also owned by AB InBev.”

“Awareness and trial in RSA benefitted from the campaign

Triple digit growth for global brand portfolio in Colombia

Revenue growth in the Western Europe region

Budweiser resumed growth in China – growth of 6.8% in 2Q2018



Brahma in Brazil strong volume performance”

Source: Beveragedaily.com