

Public Relations

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Jack Horner Communications Inc.
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Case Study: Carnegie Mellon Comprehensive Campaign Launch

The Challenge

Carnegie Mellon University launched an ambitious \$1 billion comprehensive campaign at an on-campus event in the fall of 2008. In the weeks prior, Carnegie Mellon wanted to generate anticipation and excitement among faculty and students, while not immediately revealing the event's true purpose or message. Jack Horner Communications (JHC) was called upon to develop a tactical teaser campaign—one that would create awareness, excitement, curiosity and—buzz—among students and drive attendance for the October launch event.

Additionally, JHC was tapped to oversee the design and building of an interactive exhibit that would unveil the theme of the comprehensive campaign—and showcase Carnegie Mellon's unique value proposition.

The Solution

The "Buzz" Factor: JHC developed creative teaser tactics around a "B There" theme. Each idea was carried out in the weeks leading up to the event. A "B There" campaign logo was created and structured with three reveals. Each phase of the logo unveiled more information about the event: "B There," "B There 10-24-08" and "B There 10-24-08 on the CFA Lawn."

"B There" flyers were placed in all 7,000 student mailboxes. To build excitement, "B There" table tents were strategically placed around campus and hundreds of bulletins were posted and replenished on a weekly basis.

JHC wrote radio spots that aired on the campus radio station. Ads ran in the student newspaper during the four weeks leading up to the event, each disclosing more information as the event came closer. Editorial pieces were also secured in all three university media publications. Giant "B There" floor decals were strategically plastered around campus and 500 small window clings were given to students to display.

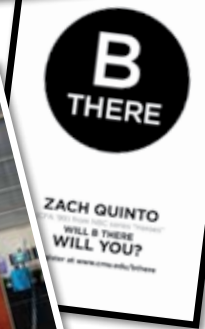
The student committee distributed JHC's "B There" lollipops and hosted a T-shirt day, where 300 students were able to design their own "B There" T-shirt. Announcements were made at football games and the online social network Facebook was used to contact all Carnegie Mellon "fans" directing people to Carnegie Mellon's cmu.edu/bthere Web site. Everywhere the students turned, they were asked and enticed to "B There."

The Launch Exhibit: JHC was also responsible for creatively directing and producing an interactive exhibit that served as the centerpiece of the entire campaign launch event. The exhibit needed to bring to life the theme of the campaign, "Inspire Innovation," which was kept secret until the launch. JHC directed the development of a free-standing exhibit that included five 13-foot panels. Each panel corresponded with one of five components of the Inspire Innovation campaign—next generation computing, artistic inquiry, global society & economy, health & wellness, and energy, environment & sustainability.

The Results

- The "B There" campaign generated so much excitement that nearly 3,000 students, alumni, faculty and staff members crowded under the campaign kick-off tent on launch day.
- A true testament to the popularity of the floor decals: students were actually removing the floor logos to decorate dorms.
- The exhibit was both interactive and informative, bringing to life all five subsets within the \$1 billion comprehensive campaign theme. The exhibit was buzzing with excitement and filled with ongoing visitors throughout launch night.

Carnegie Mellon



10.24.08



"Our goal was to build excitement among students and drive attendance for our comprehensive campaign event. Jack Horner Communications brought us exciting ideas, resulting in student buzz and increased participation. Their attention to detail was crucial to our efforts. The 'B There' buzz helped us achieve well over our goal of 1,500 students in attendance."

Amanda Kengersky
Assistant Director, Marketing Communications
Carnegie Mellon University