

THE BIG IDEA

When you think about sport's most thrilling moments, most of us have memories that we replay again and again.

But have you ever wished you'd not just been there, but experienced those moments? Seen them through an athlete's eyes?

That's what Reebok set out to do. To entertain and amaze like never before. To use Virtual Reality to transform screens into windows that drop you directly into the moment that matters most in sports.

BACKGROUND

In the fall of 2015, we relaunched the Reebok ZPump sneaker - our first update to the iconic 70s basketball court shoe.

However, with an audience of younger Millennials, we believed strongly that banners and digital placements couldn't hope to engage them, let alone drive harder sales actions.

So we set out on a new path with an objective to create a unique content program designed to intrigue and entertain our audience. To peel back the truth about sporting moments. A program that would invite and not interrupt them and then hopefully allow us, slowly, to start selling to them.

With this brief we knew we had to reinvent our historic content approach. To break new boundaries and engage like never before.

And it was a risk. To hope that content could drive not just brand metrics but also drive immediate business benefit - eComm site visits and email acquisition.

THE CREATIVE IDEA

To engage savvy Millennials we focused on a key ZPump product insight.

It's a unique sneaker because it has a rather striking feature, a small button that is pumped to create a snug fit around the athlete's foot.

What we've learned by talking to athletes about this action is that it creates both a physical sensation and a psychological one too. Athletes

get a mental 'locked-in' boost when they pump the button, so they use it as a key step in their preparation.

Our idea was to explore this often ignored ritual. To document for the first time the inner preparation athletes go through in that critical moment, and then, using Virtual Reality, allow viewers to experience a wide variety of sporting achievements.

The result was a documentary called "The Moment".

A five-part video series telling the personal moments within Parkour, Triple Jump, Basketball, Rock Climbing and UFC.

THE STRATEGY

Our strategy was to use innovation to intrigue Millennials. Many brands are trying 360VR but few tell a good story. In "The Moment" the story was everything.

Each film told personal stories about athletes' preparation rituals, training, and finally the key moment of focus before they attempted something never tried before.

And at this point we offered an alternate path to view it in 360VR.

Watching on mobile devices or desktop, the user is asked if they want to carry on watching in standard HD or choose a new adventure. Using YouTube's recently launched native 360VR functionality, those that tapped for VR turned their phone into a full spherical film allowing them to experience a window into our athletes' minds.

And each film pushed 360VR to new heights using custom rigs - head mounted, body mounted, drone mounted - if we could put a VR camera on it, we did it.

THE EXECUTION

"The Moment" was part of a complex but connected ecosystem of content.

Core films and their VR components formed the first contact point with Millennials.

We then sequenced additional content across Reebok and partner channels with a series of How-To videos. These one-minute films encouraged viewers to take action. From UFC submission holds, backflips in the sand, to rock climbing negatives, we showed our audience how they could move one step closer to the athletes' stories they'd just experienced.

Still photography captured during each shoot then showed product in increasingly relevant ways and was used both on site and with an email capture program. We also created a series of behind the scenes films for our partners to use as exclusive content to drive further sales.

We even built the Reebok VR mobile channel and designed a cardboard viewer as a retail incentive. The first global sneaker VR channel ever.

THE OUTCOME

Our unique and visceral documentaries captured moments of personal achievement and the sweat and hard work behind them.

Filming was brutal. We got in the ring with Paige VanZant, and we sat in 100°F head in the desert with Sierra Blair-Coyle, and our audience embraced the reality we shared.

In four months we have achieved a whopping 12MM video views (and counting) which is double the forecast target based on all previous video programs.

We were able to directly drive 2.2MM eComm visits, which were more than three times versus target - in fact 90% of visits during the campaign were net new users to Reebok.com

And then, finally, we beat email and CRM acquisitions by 4X.

From *Adweek* to the thousands of fan comments, the sentiment was the same "This is the coolest shit I've ever fucking seen."

These films achieved great results. But they also served a higher purpose in our organization proving that great stories don't just entertain, they can drive sales.

