



P|E|M
Peabody Essex Museum



Not Just a Museum

An Antidote to the Algorithm

The **Peabody Essex Museum (PEM)** was trying to reach new audiences and bring them to Salem, Mass., for a non-witch-related experience. They came to our agency for an awareness campaign, but we saw a bigger opportunity — to stake a claim about what makes them different from other museums with a new brand platform.

We introduced the platform with a brand campaign that puts the PEM experience in direct opposition to the endless scroll: **ESCAPE THE ALGORITHM**. Eye-catching imagery paired real people with headlines that compare how real experiences like taking a stroll through a museum are greater than digital ones. The campaign came to life across advertising, engagement-driving activities, and museum experiences.

To be sure that the campaign would connect with the diverse new audiences PEM sought to engage — and to be certain we weren't overlooking any cultural blind spots — we brought together our **Cultural Advisory Council** for the first time. This group is an informal-yet-outspoken sounding board for creative ideas, combining community leadership and activism with deep marketing expertise.

In market from July to December 2024, the campaign drove remarkable increases in awareness and participation. The number of website sessions went up by almost 50% and the number of new website visitors went up by almost 75%. Even though the campaign goals were awareness-based, it brought in 145 website purchases, leading to an unexpected revenue stream.



Stroll > Scroll



Escape the Algorithm | pem.org / Salem, MA

Scenes > Screens



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Art > Artificial



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Touch > Screen



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