

Real Life is Still the Real MVP

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Are people more engaged when an event transpires or when an event is relayed? In a world that is becoming less trusting, more suspicious, and perhaps a bit fearful, it's real-world connections that consumers genuinely crave. That is where communities are born, and it is where people share, engage, and develop a common ground that fuels the birth of community.

Online is where those collective experiences are relayed, and a kinship is then fostered. It can be seen in the success of businesses like SoulCycle, Airbnb, and Lyft. Similarly, it can be exemplified in the recent political demonstration around the globe supporting women's rights. Surely it would have been easier to establish a demonstration online, but, how much more impactful and empowering was it to physically march, along with thousands of like-minded others and then share those experiences online with a broader community?

Who is more likely to be an influencer: the person experiencing the event or the recipient of the social sharing? Lane Bryant, for example, uses out of home (OOH) as a primer for body-positive conversation by featuring models who confidently show off their powerful, beautiful physique. The campaigns prompt women to comment with their own photos and constructive messages.

While mobile and digital media thrive with rapid expansion in device capability and penetration, real life and meaningful connections continues to take place out of the home. So why are we focusing so much media investment online rather than taking advantage of the opportunity to be part of those moments that matter most?



OOH as a medium is not merely a board or a sign, it can also be a poignant and impactful experience that is later shared online. Timberland commissioned a well-known street artist to create a live art installation on the streets of New York's iconic Herald Square. The live event gave passersby access to view the creative process firsthand, and it also allowed them to capture the experience and share it across social. The event and campaign drove viral chatter online and on the streets in real life.

With the rise of fake news, click injection, frequency abuse, app fraud, and privacy laws, it is refreshing to know that a safe medium exists where you are less likely to be "catfished." Today, OOH offers real metrics for success comparable with other media and is validated by third parties.

While our lives continue to be enriched and made easier by new connections with the likes of Siri, Cortana, and Alexa, the fact remains that real people and real, physical locations are much more meaningful. The subways or roadways we travel each morning and night, the elevators we take up to our offices, and the coffee shops we frequent every day are all part of our regular routine and present canvases that disrupt the clutter and form brand connections at the places and moments that matter most.