



PLAY A GAME

GETTING PEOPLE to be involved with the brand means getting them to build it into their lives. One way is to encourage them to see the brand as fun, and to play around with the product—which is why car dealers allow customers to take test drives. Salespeople call this the puppy dog close: once you've cuddled the puppy, it's hard to give it back!

Obviously this is not always possible with expensive or delicate products, so if that's what you're selling you need to think of some other way of allowing people to be playful with the brand. Sometimes the internet can help.

The idea

When Panasonic launched their Lumix camera range, they needed to promote the key features of the camera—its 10x optical zoom, and its 28mm wide-angle lens. The TV advertising campaign featured the Golden Gate Bridge crumpling up to accommodate someone using an ordinary camera, and the Sphinx coming toward a photographer to show how the optical zoom makes things look better. These campaigns were wonderful and eye-catching—but any marketer knows that advertising alone is never enough.

Panasonic commissioned Inbox Digital to create an online game called Lumix World Golf. The game is based around an 18-hole game of crazy golf played around nine world heritage sites. Players can zoom in and out to judge their shots (as they would with the camera) and can win prizes, offset against signing up for the Lumix e-CRM (customer relationship management) program.

There is, of course, a “tell a friend” button so that people who enjoy playing the game can involve a friend. The game itself is quite addictive and engaging—plugs for the camera are shown between each hole, and players are congratulated or commiserated with according to how well they play each hole.

The site attracted over a million visitors, most of whom found out about the site through friends.

In practice

- The game needs to be professionally executed and slick.
- It needs to connect to the product in a straightforward but fun way.
- It should connect with other promotions to reinforce the message.
- It should ALWAYS have a tell-a-friend button.