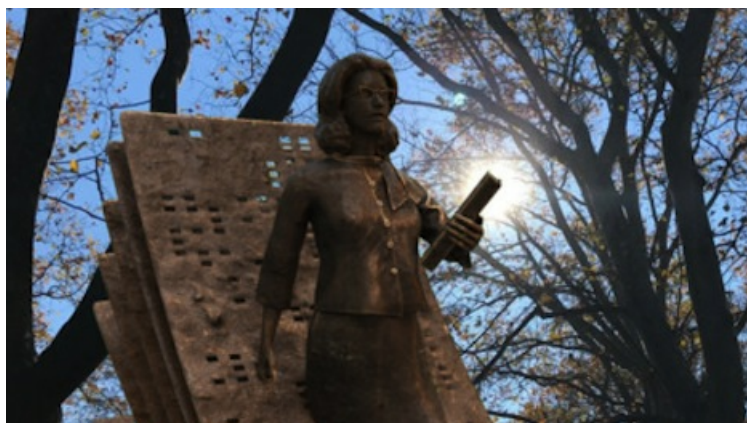


MARKETING

Do not use VR solely for the sake of using VR: T Brands exec

April 3, 2017



T Brands' Hidden Figures campaign on its AR app

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

NEW YORK An executive from New York Times' T Brands studio touched on the impact VR can have on high-end advertising, but stressed the importance of not just implementing the technology without a clear purpose.

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Virtual reality and 360-video are making a big impact in content creation as well as advertising, but it is important to focus on how to use these formats. During a session at the NEXT Conference, the T Brands exec explained that advertisers who leverage VR need to tell a story that benefits from the proximity the technology provides.

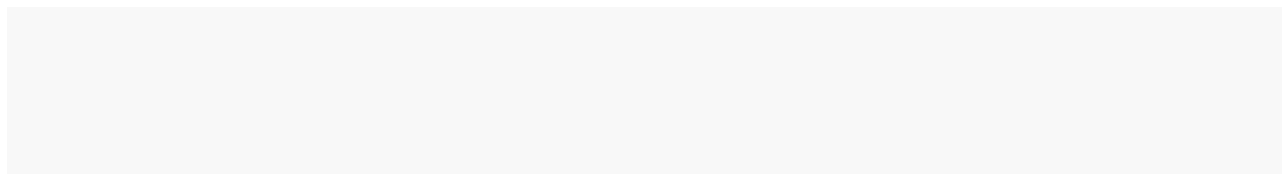
"You're walking into a world that is full transparency," said Sydney Levin, executive producer at T Brands, NYTimes. "There is no behind the scenes."

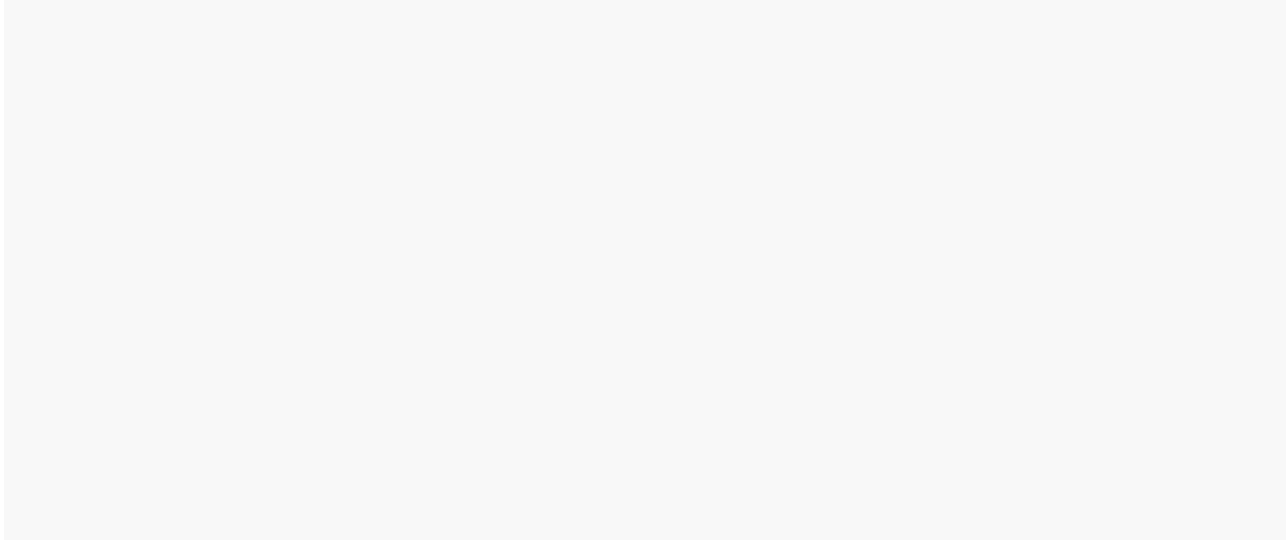
Havas Luxe organized the conference.

Virtual reality

During the session "The New York Times, Is The Future of News & Advertising Virtual?," Ms. Levin along with her colleagues Nick Van Amburg and Marc Vavall showed examples of special experiences The New York Times and T Brands were able to create for brands.

For instance, KIA Cadenza hoped to create a special experience and turn its own vehicle into an interactive tool for three events. The events were created with the idea of creating a luxury product and exclusive experience, but also bring those at home in on the special moment.





I've played guitar, piano, ukulele, violin, and even once tried to make sound out of a flute (failed, btw), but I've never played a car! Thanks for that, @kiamotorsusa :) #ad #KiaCadenza

A post shared by Kina Grannis (@kinagrannis) on Jan 23, 2017 at 7:10pm PST

T Brands did this through the use of AR, VR, social media and many other forms of technology.

Influencers were able to come and create immersive content to share with their followers and bring them in on the experience.

Also, to promote the film Hidden Figures, the New York Times created an experience through a mobile application that placed actual hidden figures throughout the United States.



T Brands' outthink hidden campaign

Users download the app T Brand Studio AR to view a map of where the figures were located.

Participants were able to search for the QR code in real life, located in 10 different cities and 150 locations through the U.S..



T Brands' outthink hidden campaign

Once the QR code was scanned, a digital statue of one of the characters appeared through AR on the app and users could learn about the individual.

NYTimes

A panel of women working in virtual reality at ad:tech New York 2016 similarly held an intense conversation about the future of the platform, including insight from another executive with The New York Times on its VR users, who clock in more than six minutes on the app more than even the newspaper's core apps.

During Madwoman VR's "The New Reality of Virtual Reality" panel Nov. 2, Jessica Northrup, who has been virtual reality program manager at The Times since the newspaper launched VR in November of last year, described its dedication towards including VR reporting as a central facet of its newsroom. She also commented on The Times' relationships with brands in working to advance its VR presence ([see more](#)).

Another example of T Brands' use of VR is a campaign for Swiss watchmaker Tag Heuer, which crafted a legend with the help of the New York Times' virtual reality mobile app.

The NYT VR app puts readers at the center of New York Times' content, including what is produced by its brand partners, through immersive 360-degree video experiences that allow for an interactive narrative. LVMH-owned Tag Heuer used the NYT VR app's storytelling capabilities to share the heritage of its Carrera timepiece with New York Times' audience, showing both its placement within the overall watch industry and its modernity ([see more](#)).

"There is no using camera angles or your framing to these limited amount of people look like a mob scene" Ms. Levin said. "And that transparency works really well for us, and it something we bring to every film.

"That is why I think branded VR film works so well because there's no where to hide," she said.

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