

CITIBANK Establishing An Identity for the New Citi Brand

THE PROBLEM:

How could Citibank establish a distinct and meaningful identity for its new Citi brand in the highly competitive financial services category?

THE SOLUTION:

Devise a media strategy utilizing the strength of outdoor advertising to reach a mass audience with a clear message defining Citi products and services.

BACKGROUND:

At the time of the campaign, the financial services category was in a state of flux. Large banking institutions were getting larger and attempting to brand themselves nationally. New legislation had allowed the bank's product offerings to expand tremendously, and internet based companies were quickly becoming new competition.

It was in this environment that Citibank needed to get the attention of the mass audience, raise the profile of the Citi brand to explain the product and service offerings, and do it in a way that broke from traditional banking communications. In addition, they needed the employees from all areas of the company to rally behind the new Citi brand with excitement.

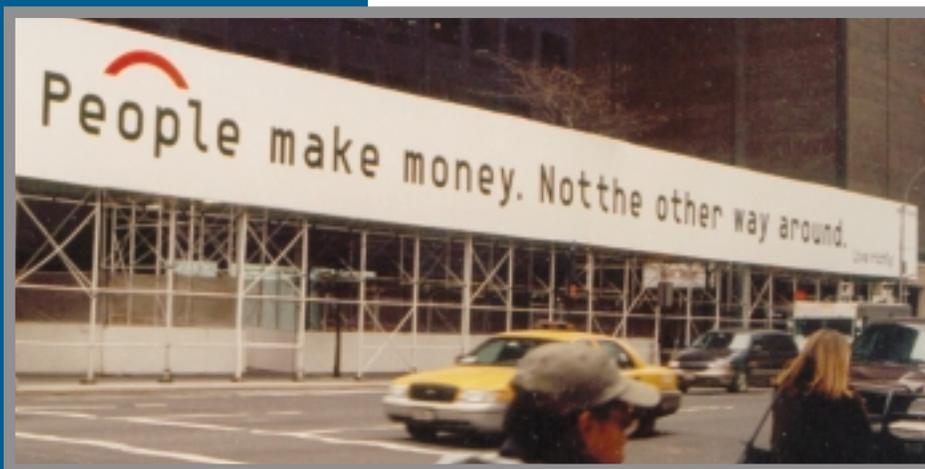
New York City was chosen as the target area not only because it is home to Citibank, but also because it is the largest banking market in the country.

OBJECTIVE:

The primary objective of the campaign was to create an identity for the new Citi brand that would clearly position all its products and services against competition.

STRATEGY:

Fallon Minneapolis was assigned the task of establishing a distinct identity for the Citi brand, and their solution was just that—distinct. They chose to use an innovative plan to create brand awareness through clever placements that would initiate talk value. No matter how creative the campaign was, though, it wouldn't be at all effective if the promise carried by the advertising differed from the brand experience offered by the Citi employees.





PLAN DETAILS:

The campaign incorporated several elements targeting multiple audiences, all of which worked together to make it a success.

- **Banking Market Continuity**—In New York and the remaining top Citi target markets, continuous outdoor advertising support was planned to make the brand a permanent fixture in the communities surrounding Citibank branches. Using geographic analysis, 30-sheet poster and bulletin locations were located near 375 branches in nine markets.
- **Brand Launch**—A combination of six outdoor formats was used to saturate the market, which included: taxi tops, 2-sheet posters in subways and along commuter rail lines, expressway bulletins, neighborhood 30-sheet posters, telephone kiosks and several high profile wall murals. The wall locations included a 350' panel near Citibank headquarters, a three-panel spectacular near Madison Square Garden, a 50' x 50' panel in Times Square and a 200' panel across from Grand Central Terminal. Each outdoor product was matched to key locations with a custom-tailored message.
- **Employees**—For the Monday morning campaign launch, a parade of 20 taxis with Citi tops circled Citibank headquarters in Queens and Manhattan to raise enthusiasm among the employees. And it worked. Many stood by windows to watch the taxis drive by. Employee-directed ads were also placed in the subway stations directly under Citibank's two main buildings.
- **Citipro Heavy-Up**—The last stage of the campaign concentrated on messages featuring Citibank's Citipro financial needs analysis service. To engage consumers in the "fill-in-the-blank" creative concept, outdoor displays were placed at eye level, including bus shelters, 8-sheet posters and rail line 2-sheet posters.

THE RESULTS:

Within just two days, the awareness of the campaign in New York City was so great, that Citibank couldn't recruit control groups for their brand monitor research. Within two weeks, unaided awareness of the Citi brand increased 73%, while unaided awareness of Citi's local banks increased 41%.

Business also increased. Citipro inquiries at branches were up 47%, while appointments were up 25%.

The campaign was also noted by national media, with Oprah Winfrey mentioning a billboard on her show, and Jean Chatzky, Editor of Money, mentioned the campaign in her column. The effort was also cited in Newsweek, Forbes, USA Today and The Wall Street Journal, among others.

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