

AWARD

Big Screen, Big Results

WINNER

Comedy Central - Awkwafina is Nora from Queens



BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

With a crowded entertainment and cable landscape, Comedy Central created this campaign knowing that its target audience, Millennials, consume a lot of content digitally. The company aimed to create buzz on social media around the first episode of its new show, "Awkwafina is Nora from Queens," to drive its audience to consume the rest of the series on linear cable, as well as grow online audience engagement. Additionally, the company knew it was imperative to build awareness for the show by allowing non-cable subscribers to sample as much of the show as possible for free on YouTube.

Since Awkwafina is a break-out YouTube star, Comedy Central was at an advantage on the platform.

CAMPAIGN & BUSINESS OBJECTIVES

Comedy Central set out to make "Awkwafina is Nora from Queens" the new, must-see television series of the year, drive strong linear ratings, and get the first episode in front of as many people as possible.

Ultimately, seeking to lift awareness and interest in watching the show, the company looked to tap into Awkwafina's YouTube stardom to maximize the breadth and impact of the campaign.

CREATIVE STRATEGY

Comedy Central used the power of the show itself in long-form clips and tune-in messages, as well as airing the first full 21-minute episode on YouTube for free. In addition, promos were created and tailored specifically to the platform, to amplify the reach and message of the campaign. Using Google's Insights Finder Beta, Comedy Central identified top Awkwafina affinities, and used affinity

and contextual targeting to reach fans of Awkwafina, competitive programming, and over-indexing interests.

WHAT ROLE DID YOUTUBE PLAY?

To drum up buzz and encourage sampling, Comedy Central began promoting long-form show clips in TrueView in-stream and Discovery placements, targeted specifically to its audience. It used YouTube Masthead on connected TVs on the night of the Golden Globes, knowing Awkwafina would be top of mind due to her nomination for "The Farewell."

In addition to airing the first episode for free on YouTube, Comedy Central also targeted connected TV devices with TrueView in-stream ads to ease transition from viewing the ad to viewing an episode.

Leveraging YouTube's video ad sequencing, Comedy Central ordered the ads so that individuals who viewed the full episode ad were later served a non-skippable straight-to-camera promo of Awkwafina reminding users to tune in to the next episode the following week (and mocking them because they couldn't skip the ad). Individuals who skipped the full episode and were later served a non-skippable critics spot to amp up the FOMO.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

- **3.8M viewers tuned in**, making "Awkwafina is Nora from Queens" Comedy Central's best series premiere and most social series premiere since 2016*
- **#1 Most Social Primetime Cable Comedy on premiere night****
- **3.2K new subscribers** were brought into the Comedy Central YouTube channel by the TrueView promotion

#1 Most Social Primetime Cable Comedy

*Source: Nielsen, L+3, P2+ AA (000), 7 nets, Jan. 2020. Nielsen Social, Aug. 2016–Jan. 2020. YT Analytics, Jan. 2020.

**Source: Nielsen Social, Jan. 2020.

WHY DID THIS CAMPAIGN WIN?

This campaign creatively used a wide suite of YouTube features to promote, tease, and integrate different campaign elements to maximize viewership of the show. This is especially significant given that people are spending more time watching YouTube on the big screen. Comedy Central also effectively tailored its campaign creative for YouTube to raise awareness of the show. All elements of the campaign were born from a solid strategy that tapped into the unique properties of the platform and leveraged Awkwafina's personality in an authentic and relevant way.

"What I liked about the Awkwafina campaign was the insight: they're launching a cable TV show that appeals to an audience that doesn't watch cable TV and they used YouTube to do that successfully."

Stacey Stewart, EVP, Managing Partner, UM

LESSONS LEARNED

- **Speaking to the Right Consumers at the Right Moment:**
Comedy Central capitalized on the reach of the Golden Globes as well as the reach of connected TV to speak to the right consumers at the right moment to launch the show. In addition, using further mid-season promotions makes this a prime example of targeting and using YouTube tools to meet consumers in a relevant way.
- **Custom Content is a Key Driver of Success:**
Leveraging Awkwafina's YouTube star power, Comedy Central created ads tailored specifically to YouTube, airing an entire episode as an ad unit and teasing the skip feature.
- **Maximizing Impact on the Big Screen:**
Comedy Central showed a linear connection between the power of YouTube and the power of the big screen in using YouTube on connected TV. This seamlessly allowed YouTube connected TV content to drive to Comedy Central, also on the big screen.

