

EVENT MARKETING AWARDS

BEST ENTERTAINMENT/MEDIA EVENT

CBS College Tour

Main Sponsor:
CBS

Agency:
Contemporary Group

Fast Facts:
A travelling event to college campuses at which CBS advertisers set up exhibits that tie products in with a CBS show. The advertisers get sampling and promotion opportunities; CBS gets publicity for its shows, and happy sponsors.

In an increasingly crowded broadcast marketplace, CBS wanted to generate interest in its programming and provide promotional opportunities for its sponsors. The solution, the network decided, was to go back to school. The CBS College Tour, put together by the Contemporary Group, brought nine sponsors to 44 college campuses with interactive exhibits themed to CBS shows.

At L'Oréal's "Studio CBS" exhibit, for example, students performed scenes from CBS' daytime soaps and received a video of their performances. At the Nestlé exhibit, students competed for prizes in a version of the game show *The Price is Right*. More than 250,000 students attended the event, which was promoted on CBS stations and in print ads and flyers posted on campus.

"The College Tour really defines event marketing at its best," said George Schweitzer, exec vp for marketing and communications at CBS. "For the consumer, there's lots of fun

there. For the sponsors, it provided them with a tremendous way to reach a very hard-to-target audience segment, college students, and do it with the borrowed equity of CBS."

The network also gained exposure for its shows among a population where the average person watches more than 13 hours a week of television.

Schweitzer said the tour is somewhat of a logistical nightmare, with two 18-wheelers trucking the exhibits from campus to campus. But sponsors seem to think it's worth the trouble. Six are returning for the 1994-1995 tour, which began in August; AT&T, Ford, L'Oréal, MasterCard, Nestlé and Warner-Lambert. They will be joined by three new sponsors: Disney, Subway and American Home Products.

"The greatest sign of success is we have advertisers who keep wanting to come back to be in it again and we have colleges who keep wanting us to come back," said Schweitzer. "You can't do better than that." —Pam Weisz

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