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11 June, 2024

MKTG 445

Nike Air Max Day Case

Nike has done a great job of using Air Max Day to create engagement through social media. Not only does this celebration promote their new releases, but it also creates a buzz for Nike in the headlines. Because the day of the celebration falls on March 26, the day that the first generation of Air Max Trainers were released in 1987, this campaign integrates the newer generation of sneaker fans as well as the old through a sense of nostalgia. Nike gains a lot of media attention through this celebration, and somebody who remembers the release of the first line of these sneakers might see Nike in the news and want to see the company's new products.

After witnessing the success of Nike Air Max Day, global brands should take note of Nike's strategy and incorporate it into their own marketing campaigns. One global brand that I am particularly interested in is Squishmallow, a line of plush toys with a variety of characters ranging from food, animals, and even popular movie characters. Each character comes with a tag which contains information like its name, birthday, and a backstory. The first Squishmallow created was named Cam the Cat and it was released in 2017. Cam's birthday is December 18. Squishmallow could take advantage of this day each year and create a celebration campaign similar to Nike Air Max Day. Squishmallow could incorporate celebrity and influencer endorsements by sending them "celebration packages" to post on social media with exclusive Squishmallow merchandise. This marketing strategy is used by Taylor Swift after each album release. She gifts celebrity fans as well as influencers merchandise associated with the new album.

Cam the Cat's story says that he would like to take a trip around the world for his birthday. In spirit of this, the company could encourage fans of the brand to post their Squishmallows in unique locations using a specified hashtag such as #CamtheCat. This is a great opportunity for Squishmallow to create content for its personal social media platforms like TikTok and Instagram, as well as interacting with fans by commenting, liking, and reposting fans posts when they use the hashtag.

Like Nike, Squishmallow could also use this celebration as an opportunity to release new products, bring back retired Squishmallows, and release exclusive merchandise each year. Similar to Nike's sneakers, retired Squishmallows like Cam the Cat have a high resale value and are heavily sought after among fans. Squishmallow could release an exclusive version of Cam the Cat each year, which would increase in value over time. They could host competitions to name new Squishmallow characters or allow fans to create a new character for their line.

Nike and any company that creates a celebration like Air Max Day use social media to learn more about their community by opening a discussion through their platforms. For example, Nike could make a post on TikTok where they encourage users to “stitch” the video with ideas for new sneaker designs or products. Stitching a video means letting a part of a video play and then adding your own content to the end responding to the video that just played. This has seen a recent surge in popularity as short-form content is becoming more popular, and people want to respond to content in a more personal way. An example of a company who used a similar marketing technique was Puma’s “Can You Recreate the Puma Logo?” The original trend began when a barista went viral for creating the Puma video on top of a latte. The company then stitched it with their employees attempting to do the same design. The result was not the same as the barista’s version, and the video resulted in fans of Puma attempting the latte art and posting it to TikTok. Nike could encourage sneaker-heads to stitch a TikTok video showing off their shoe collection or telling a story about why Nike sneakers are important to them. Through creating this line of communication with fans, Nike will better be able to understand what their customers want in a sneaker. Nike can also share the most moving stories or impressive shoe collections through reposting on TikTok or sharing the videos on their Instagram story.

In the future, Nike can open a contest or giveaway to reach new audiences using their hashtag. The contest could consist of coming up with a new sneaker design that would be featured in their next release. Nike could then post a poll with their top 3 designs, and open voting for their followers to choose their favorite. Not only does this engage their current following and allow them to have a say in the products being produced, but it encourages artists and graphic designers who don’t currently engage with Nike to show off their skills and follow the brand more closely. This will open a conversation through the hashtag across platforms where people share their opinions, ideas, and feedback on the designs. Nike will also see a spike in their following because people will not want to miss the voting period.

Aside from social media, Nike could use their website as a digital marketing tool in order to increase engagement for Nike Air Max Day. One way to drive fans to their website would be through interactive games that would boost their spot in line for the next sneaker release. Taylor Swift used to use a similar technique before her concert tickets were open to the public. Loyal fans could log into her website daily and watch videos or play short games to boost their position in line and be the first to choose their seats. Nike could follow this strategy by releasing a daily mini game or interactive video to give their fans a better chance of receiving the newest sneakers. They could also reintegrate social media by asking fans to post their scores from the mini games or answer a question from the video with the #NikeAirMaxDay.

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