

DIGITAL *Done Right*

THE **DIGITAL LANDSCAPE** CAN BE **TREACHEROUS** FOR **BRANDS**, BUT AMPLE **REWARDS AWAIT** THOSE ABLE TO **NAVIGATE** COMPLEXITIES OF THE RAPIDLY **EVOLVING SPACE.** > *By Mike Troy*

Consumer goods companies who have struggled with digital marketing efforts over the years can look to HEINEKEN USA for inspiration. The brewer has emerged as CPG leader in the effective use of digital, overcoming challenges unique to the alcoholic beverage category, to engage with shoppers and drive sales.

What makes digital work at HEINEKEN USA has a lot to do with how the structure of the company's brand groups and their interaction with in-house and agency digital experts to ensure digital is integrated consistently in all manner of brand communications. One of the most recent examples involves a massive initiative called "They Score, You Score," which Heineken launched March 1 with Major League Soccer (MLS) and the Union of European Football Association's (UEFA) Champions League. The global undertaking runs throughout the season with a focus on encouraging legal drinking age consumers to purchase Heineken for all soccer viewing occasions and employs a novel approach to drive engagement.

Fans are given a chance to win prizes with every goal scored during every MLS and UEFA Champions League (UCL) match, thus the name "They Score, You Score." To drive awareness of the program throughout the season, Heineken is targeting consumers seeking soccer relevant content by activating national 15 and 30 second match day TV commercials, digital and social content, and a bespoke mobile portal. To sustain engagement and heighten the viewing experience, Heineken asks soccer fans to text-to-win after every goal scored to win UCL and MLS gift cards worth up to \$50 redeemable for team merchandise. Heineken has also created a mobile soccer hub to be the fan's portal for all information on both soccer leagues and matches including play schedules, countdown to match days, live score updates, the latest world soccer news, and special offers. Digital and social content will promote the program and prizes (@HeinekenSoccer) driving consumers to the Heineken soccer website.

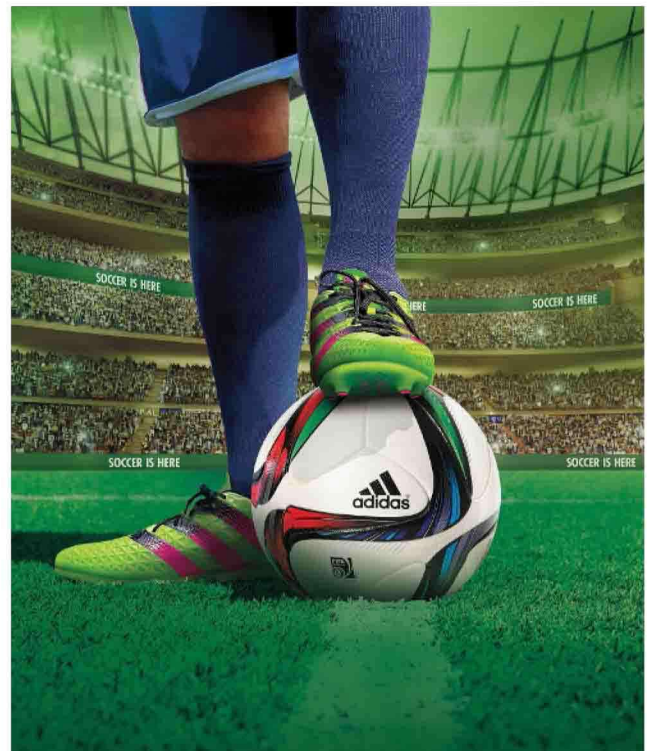
"They Score. You Score enhances the soccer viewing occasion through access to social content, the latest scores, and upcoming games," according to Ralph Rijks, Senior Vice President with Heineken USA.

Heineken left no stone unturned when contemplating ways to engage and activate consumers for its flagship brand and it

employs the same digital rigor to other brands in its portfolio such as Tecate and Dos Equis.

The Tecate brand is leveraging boxing's huge popularity in Mexico with a campaign called "Fight Night Every Night." On May 6, boxing's two hottest Mexican fighters — Canelo Alvarez and Julio Cesar Chavez, Jr. — square off in Las Vegas. To capitalize on the buildup to the event, the Tecate brand launched a campaign on March 1 that gives fight fans a digital ringside seat thanks to a mobile app called Bold Punch. To drive downloads and usage of the app billed as a mobile companion for the fight, a high volume of social activity is planned, including posts from the Tecate brand, Golden Boy Promotions, Canelo Alvarez and the "Chicas Tecate," a group of attractive young woman who make promotional appearances for the brand.

"Fight Night Every Night sustains consumer participation by keeping the title bout top of mind with great prizes and, through the Bold Punch app, providing our users the experience of feeling every Canelo punch with vibration on their phone. In addition, the app provides the latest fight info, exclusive videos, fighter bios



and stats, and tips on how to watch the May 6th showdown,” said Juan Carlos Montes, Commercial Market Manager for Tecate.

While Tecate is leveraging digital to expand usage and frequency, HEINEKEN USA’s Dos Equis brand has aligned itself with the Cinco de Mayo Mexican holiday widely celebrated in the U.S. To drive awareness, program buzz and conversation, a dedicated TV spot, part of the brand’s newly refreshed Most Interesting Man campaign, will be accompanied by heavy social media including Facebook and Instagram. Additionally, Dos Equis is working with digital vendors Drizly, an alcohol delivery service, and Touchtunes to amplify the promotional activity that runs from late March through Cinco de Mayo.

The emphasis HEINEKEN USA places on digital is facilitated by an organizational structure and operating philosophy required for a dynamic category with some unique regulatory challenges. Helping navigate the complexities of the digital realm at HEINEKEN USA is Haley Rubin who serves as the Digital Shopper Media Lead. Unlike some companies, HEINEKEN USA doesn’t have a centralized digital strategy team that pushes programs to the brands. Instead, individual brands such as Heineken, Tecate and Dos Equis are responsible for their execution plans and Rubin works across the brand portfolio in coordination with agency of record MediaVest to lend her digital expertise. She joined HEINEKEN USA three years ago after serving in a digital role at Diageo and with prior marketing experience at Philips and PepsiCo. She leads digital shopper marketing media strategy and implementation across HEINEKEN USA to ensure that digital shopper touch points are embedded within all national, regional, channel and customer level programs.

“Whenever there is a brand platform and we have an execution for that platform in the traditional above the line space that includes such things as TV, radio, print and outdoor, we also put in a layer of more targeted shopper media and I lead that across the organization,” Rubin said.

For example, with the Heineken soccer program, Rubin and MediaVest worked across the board with the above the line team and the below the line team that is focused on trade spending such as point-of-sale materials or retail ads, to come up with a holistic execution strategy. That strategy includes at what point messages show up in various media and what iteration of the message

should show up digitally to support the brand’s campaign.

“What we want to showcase in the marketplace is a unified message with different touch points, not different messages and different creatives. Everything used to showcase the brand should be the same down to the fonts and the visuals you choose so there is consistency to the end user. There is a lot of work and coordination among various teams that goes into making that happen,” Rubin said.

The same could be said



—Haley Rubin,
Digital Shopper Media Lead,
HEINEKEN USA



▲ The Tecate brand has Canelo Alvarez, above, in its digital corner when he battles Julio Cesar Chavez, Jr. on May 6.

of any CPG company’s efforts, but where things become more challenging for HEINEKEN USA is the nature of the category with its inconsistent patchwork of local, state and federal regulations regarding the sale and promotion of beer and a blurring of the line between above the line and below the line advertising. The advertising distinction is key, because different rules apply. For example, with above the line advertising, which includes digital, alcoholic beverage companies have to make sure they are not advertising to those under the legal drinking age. That is easy to do with a company like Facebook that has first party data on its users and knows birthdates, but gets a little trickier with other sites.

Conversely, below the line expenditures, including large in-store displays, are not regulated in the same fashion, which is somewhat ironic considering the number of minors who frequent stores where such displays are visible. The gray area that has emerged is in-store displays that have a digital component and discerning which rules apply.

“Our lawyers definitely have their work cut out for them and the landscape is constantly changing,” Rubin said. “There is a lot of opportunity with digital because we have such rich content and it is a fun and exciting category with interesting sponsorships, partnerships and brand stories to draw from that can be activated and leveraged. It is also very challenging to navigate the space in a legally sound way and still take advantage of those opportunities to deliver brand messages that connect shoppers to occasions in a meaningful and rich way while being relevant and authentic.”

Whether in the physical or digital world, the fundamental shopper marketing principle of “stop, engage and land the sale,” applies to both, according to Rubin.

“Stop, engage and land started with shopper marketing and has evolved into the digital space where you apply the same principles, but it is more confusing because of all the touch points and the need to be contextually relevant to different shopper segments,” Rubin said. **RL**