# BRAND X: Developing the Next Generation of Event Marketer FOR CREATORS OF EXPERIENCE JUNE/JULY 2013 factor MATCH.COM'S **RECAPS FROM** THE SOTS MOWEN IN EASILY MARKETING SPECIAL REPORT HOW TO USE INISTRACE AM. Laura McEwen, VP and Publisher, Self Magazine eventmarketer.com





## THE ECONOMY IS GROWING. EMPLOYMENT IS ON THE UPTICK. YET MOST COLLEGE STUDENTS DON'T EVEN KNOW THE EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING INDUSTRY EXISTS, UNTIL NOW.

I'm going to quickly give you the backstory so it all clicks. I got a call last November from George P. Johnson's senior vp-creative John Trinanes. He wanted to shake things up at colleges and universities—and here's why: The experiential marketing industry is growing at 10 to 15 percent a year, but college students have no idea it exists.

Look around... everybody on your team just "happened" to stumble into our little \$150 billion industry. Yes, that's what makes it all so special. But trust me, if we don't begin to expose college students to what we all do for a living, your department will be empty in 10 years. There are no classes or majors or textbooks on experiential marketing. There's no platform that even exposes students to what you do. For this industry to survive its own long-term growth projections, we must all come together to develop the next generation. And so after I received that call from John, we got together and cooked up the Brand X Challenge, a national student design competition on experiential marketing.

The concept: Empower undergraduate design and marketing students to create a mock experiential marketing campaign for a real brand, in the process exposing them and others to this side of marketing in a way that starts to build awareness and buzz for our industry. The idea was to let the kids submit concepts and then bring in a few brandside marketers to judge the entries—we figured if the students knew that real brands were judging their work, they'd get that much more excited and try that much harder. To be honest, at that point we were just guessing.

In full disclosure, until we unveiled Brand X on stage at the Event Marketing Summit in May, we'd been keeping all of this very low-profile. Why? We didn't know what would happen. We didn't know if colleges and universities would embrace this. We didn't know if students would care. We didn't know if the industry would react. We didn't know if anybody would even notice.

But once we started—once we began to tell a few folks and roll this out—we knew this was something special.

And so we had a concept cooked up by John at GPJ. And I came to the table with the activation support of our Event Marketer and Event Design teams, with our ED managing editor Patrick Gorman running point on it all (the students eventually referred to him as Dr. X). But we needed a brand to serve as the X in the first Brand X. John ran into Shana Gritsavage who heads up event marketing at Under Armour, mentioned what we were doing... and Under Armour was in. So we built a competition in which students designed a mock experiential campaign for Under Armour's sponsorship of next winter's Olympics in Russia.

We then reached out to a few design associations to see if they'd be interested in supporting the program. User Experience Professionals, the Color Marketing Group and our own Event Marketing Institute came on board—and the incoming chairman of the Industrial Design Society of America called me back in about two minutes to pledge full support. Interesting. OK, so what came next? We needed to line up a few brands to judge the entries, so we quietly sent out a few notes and left a few voicemails to see if anybody was interested. We figured five judges would be great.

Within an hour we had the five judges including Coke,

## INTRODUCTION BY DAN HANOVER PROFILES BY PATRICK GORMAN

Audi, MBNA and Electronic Arts. Within 90 minutes we had 10 including Macy's, FedEx, Nintendo and IBM. And then 35, including Hyundai, Microsoft, Walmart, Oracle, Target, Visa, Intel, Wells Fargo, American Express and Gap. And then there were 40. Trust me, there has never been an initiative in this industry that was supported as quickly as this one.

There were lots of moving pieces, and we loved every minute of it. We kicked things off with an influencer phase targeting professors and deans at 200 colleges and universities across the country. Each received an email from me encouraging them to promote Brand X to their students and to be on the lookout for a kit we mailed them. Each teacher's kit included an overview of the program, 10 flyers to put up around school, one-sheeters to put in faculty mailboxes and some canned explanations of Brand X for them to read aloud during classes. Within a week we received calls from excited professors at RISD, Syracuse, Auburn University, Art Center and

We then came up with the student award. The winning team would get \$3,000 in cash, a paid internship with George P. Johnson and a trip to the Event Marketing Summit to accept their award. Second placers received \$2,000 and third place \$1,000.

Next, Patrick Gorman cracked open the Brand X Facebook page,

which served as the hub for all content and communications with the students. And in an effort to use one target to snoop on another, we issued a challenge to students, asking them to post photos of Brand X collateral on display in their schools to Facebook in exchange for Starbucks gift cards. It allowed us to confirm the teachers were posting the materials from their kits.

Students had six weeks to create a mock experiential marketing campaign for Under Armour's winter Olympic sponsorship. They were required to create a campaign that tied to four key filters of experience design. In the "attract" filter they had to design the look and feel for the overall program, from colors and copy to fonts and messaging. In the "engage" filter, they had to create a pre-Olympics program that started 100 days before the Olympics to get consumers excited. This phase had to include a 10-market mall tour featuring a 10x10 experiential footprint as well as social media elements.

The next filter, the "immerse" filter, asked the students to design a 50-by-50-foot brand pavilion to be set up in Olympic Park in Sochi during the Games, and they had to amplify the







IN IT TO WIN IT: Under Armour, GPJ and EM were all on hand to announce the winners of the inaugural Brand X Challenge at the Event Marketing Summit in May.

footprint online using technology and social media. The final filter, the "reward" filter, pushed the students to create an incentive for consumers to interact with Under Armour and also asked for mock ROI and metrics reports.

It was a six-week competition. We announced it in early February and the students had until March 1 to sign up to participate in teams of four. Once they signed up, they had two weeks to attend a pair of ondemand virtual training sessions, one taught by Shana from Under Armour on the UA brand, and the other taught by John on experience design. Once the 60 teams attended the training webcasts, they had a month to frame out their concept.

In late March, we enlisted the global creative department at George P. Johnson for Mentor Week. Each team was assigned two GPJ designers for a 30-minute "mentor call" in which the students took the designers through their concept. We asked the designers to offer constructive feedback but not help them too much. Once Mentor Week was over, the students had two weeks to prepare their final entries.

And if we didn't have enough going on, we decided to get the kids even more pumped up by recruiting a head judge to speak to them about experiential design and marketing. Ann Rubin, IBM's vp-branded con-

tent and global creative, came on board and within 48 hours we pushed out a video from her to the kids that gave them some insights about experiential marketing and got them excited.

From there, entries were uploaded to our awards portal in mid-April, judges scored online a week later... and here we are. According to Facebook analytics, 88 percent of the 1,000 students attached to the facebook.com/brandxchallenge hub were interacting on average five times a week throughout the program. The viral Facebook shares of Brand X posts touched 497,000 college students across the country.

And the entries that came in were unbelievable. Before we give you a taste of Brand X, I'd like to thank our partners and judges for helping us build the next generation of experiential marketing. And if you'd like a crack at being Brand X next year or would like to be on the judge's list, email us at brandx@red7media.com.

And now, to give you a taste of the ideas, the creative thinking and the concepts... here are the top eight Brand X submissions.

-D.H.

# Thank You

Our many thanks go out to the brands, judges and others who helped launch the Brand X Challenge. Together, we are driving the industry forward and elevating the conversation.

And we're just getting started.





eventmarketer EDESIGN







A PROJECT: WORLDWIDE AGENCY

## **NC STATE UNIVERSITY**



PLACE

#### CONCEPT: Unleash Your Athlete

#### **TEAM MEMBERS:**

Elizabeth Meyers, ermeyers@ncsu.edu Miranda Melton, mjmelton@ncsu.edu Shelby Arany, searanyi@ncsu.edu

**DETAILS:** Team Wolfpack wowed the judging panel with a well-balanced campaign that incorporates live experiences leading up to the games, mobile applications and a killer on-site activation in Sochi. "Unleash Your Athlete" encourages active lifestyles and collaboration in the target audience (elementary through high school-aged kids). The campaign kicks off with 10 mall events nationwide, featuring the interactive and super-fun Ice House exhibit. Inside the Ice House, kids participate in a virtual snowball fight, engage with the Under Armour brand and are introduced to the "Unleash Your Athlete" mobile application. The app inspires innovation through a series of weekly challenges and continues through the Olympics. During each challenge, kids have the opportunity to connect and share with friends while playing augmented reality games. The mobile platform also provides information about Olympic events and promotes social interactions with Team USA. On the ground in Russia, Olympic attendees will visit the big "Team USA" Ice House. In this exhibit, children will participate in a variety of winter team sports, while the adults dig into interactive elements to learn more about Team USA. All participants will interact with a series of collaborative games and have a chance to meet the athletes. As a Post-Olympic conversation, all players who completed the weekly app challenges will be mailed a "training packet" that shows the player's progression throughout the kickoff event. Users are then encouraged to keeping training their inner athlete with a new "Train Harder" UA app.

ONLINE BEFORE







USER RECIEVES PUSH NOTIFICATION OF A NEW CHALLENGE.



USER WATCHES A VIDEO FEATURING A TEAM USA MEMBER GIVING CHALLENGE













- ADUSTS AND CHILDREN
TRAFFIC FLOW

USER RECIEVES PUSH NOTIFICATIONS OF EVENTS, SCHEDULES, RESULTS, AND MEETS WITH THE ATHLETES.



AUGMENTED REALITY DIRECTIONS ALLOW USERS TO NAVIGATE AROUND SOCHI.



USERS CAN VIEW SCHEDULES OF EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES GOING ON AT THE OLYMPIC PARK.



#### "ICE HOUSE" AT THE MALL

- 20 x 20 Foot Exhibit
- Interactive Snowball Fight
- Phone case reward
- Download of mobile app
- Interactive Shopping Wall



## FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY





**CONCEPT:** Your Journey Begins

#### **TEAM MEMBERS:**

Ashley Kasul, kasula@ferris.edu Haley Hawes, hawesh@ferris.edu Brandon Knap, knapb@ferris.edu Alex Papin, papina@ferris.edu

**DETAILS:** The big concept behind The Ferris State team's Under Armour campaign is growth. Through participation in the campaign, the audience will realize its potential to grow as athletes and, in turn, how Under Armour can help them achieve their goals. The tagline, "Your Journey Begins," is meant to be an open-ended inspiration for consumers that invites them to begin their personal journey of athletic growth. The 20-by-20-foot mall experiences leading up to the Games feature a set of motion-based interactive games that run along one wall of each space. Three gaming stations get attendees moving with winter games such as snowboarding, speed skating, figure skating and skiing. Another display loops footage of UA messages and spots about child athletes around the country, the sports they participate in and the Olympians they aspire to be like. UA buttons and key chains are given away, with QR codes that link attendees to the online experience. Onsite, the campaign is centered around inspiring Olympic-themed messaging, fueled by users submitting social media messages to their favorite teams or athletes that will appear on a series of ticker systems at different Olympic venues. When the Olympics end, participants will come together to share their Olympic moments and raise awareness for school athletics through video submissions. Under Armour helps to raise awareness through Olympic athletes visiting the winning schools and providing winners new UA uniforms and gear.







is is the home screen for the pregames site. Clicking the button next to Your Journey Begins will launch a video about the new Under Armour campaign



#### 50X50 3D LAYOUT



**EVENT MARKETER** JUNE/JULY 2013

#### PREGAMES ONLINE



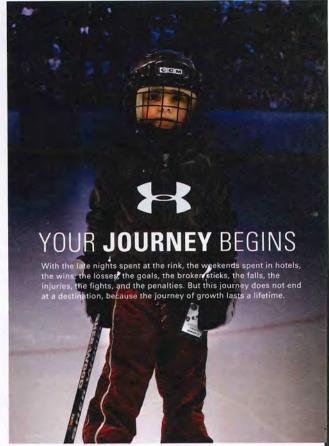


dates will occur here as the Olympic games approach along with a link to Sochi 2014

#### AT-GAMES ONLINE









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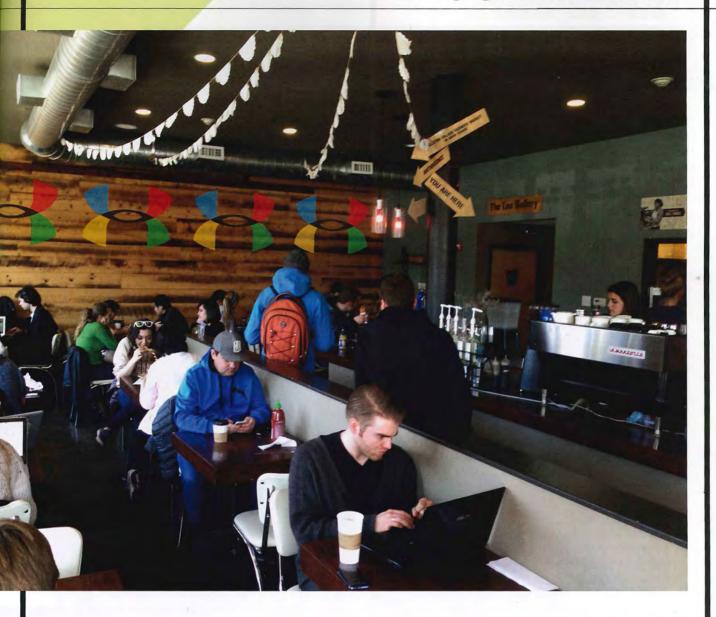
CONCEPT: #GOBEYOND
TEAM MEMBERS:

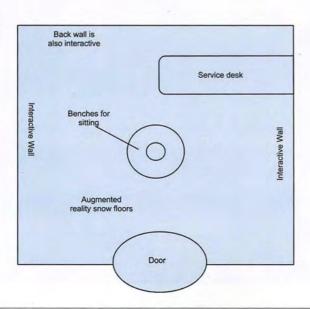
Michael Furst, mbfurst@suffolk.edu Zachary Sousa, zsousa91@gmail.com

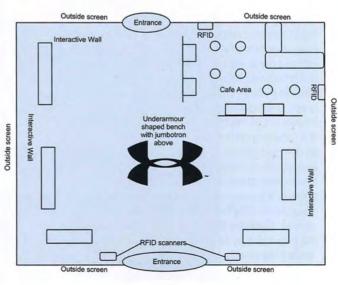
**DETAILS:** The Suffolk U team's experiences aim to build awareness and drive conversions through innovative and unique design, combined with interactive features that connect consumers with the brand. The campaign's 20-by-20-foot retail spaces occupy 10 storefronts in high-traffic areas in 10 major cities throughout the U.S., launching 100 days out from the Winter Olympics. The outside windows of the space feature a semi-transparent digital display of the UA Olympic logo. The window reacts to movement, as moving animated graphic tiles track and follow motion when the user gets close. When consumers walk in, the floors project footprints in reaction to movement, so it looks like the user is walking through snow. Inside, the walls are interactive screens that respond to both touch and motion. The screens reflect the user's image while making the background appear to be an ice rink or snowy mountain, transporting them into the Olympic Games. When the wall is approached, it responds to movement, showing tiles containing videos of the Olympic athletes performing their sport wearing Under Armour products. At the actual Games, the exterior of the 50-by-50-foot space features giant screens displaying Olympic highlights and live action from the events. The screens also highlight Olympic tweets and take highlight requests through Twitter using the hashtag #UAreplay. Inside, the log cabin-inspired space follows the same concepts as the 20-by-20-foot footprint, but includes a cafe lounge broadcasting Wi-Fi to keep people nearby and help drive conversions.











## **NC STATE UNIVERSITY**



PLACE

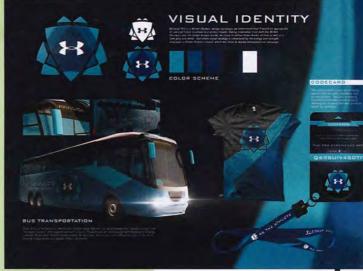
**CONCEPT:** The Pro Experience: Be the Athlete

#### **TEAM MEMBERS:**

Michael Celedonia, maceledo@ncsu.edu William VanderVeen, wfvander@ncsu.edu Yairon Martinez, yymartin@ncsu.edu

**DETAILS:** The Pro Experience features television advertisements, public installation displays, a mobile application, a personalized ID card and lots of other fun Olympic tidbits to immerse attendees in the 2014 Games. But The Pro Experience is more than a hyped sporting event giveaway. This campaign makes deliberate comparisons between the attendees and the athletes at the games, revealing to the regular folks that they are not so different from the Olympic athletes themselves. In its pre-event stages, the campaign begins by placing guerrilla design installations into major pedestrian areas around the country. These installations make subtle references to the overall comparison the campaign plans to achieve. The 20-by-20-foot mall sites are composed very simply and appeal to consumers viscerally. The site is placed in open indoor area malls and universities and has eight white banners hanging from the site's ceilings flanked by large video monitors. Displayed on these screens are videos of athletes that are still 70 percent of the time and moving 30 percent of the time (repeating every 30 seconds), performing an Olympic exercise/task that is unique to them or their event. Projected onto the ground from underneath these banners is a snowy texture that senses when users walk across the space and reacts by leaving footprints in the snow on the ground. Speakers hidden in the banners also aid the projectors by providing sounds of snow crunching when users walk by.

















## **CONCEPT:** Geared for More **TEAM MEMBERS:**

Danny Choo, danchoo88@gmail.com Soo Yeun Ji, sji@risd.edu, KiHo Suh, ksuh@risd.edu

DETAILS: Team RISD's "Geared for More" campaign focuses on Under Amour's strength in innovation and technology, while showing consumers that the brand can get them "geared for more." The core experience at the pre-Olympics on-site space focuses on showing support for Team USA by writing encouraging messages on tablets provided at UA pop-up locations. These messages are then displayed on huge electronic billboards at each high-traffic venue. The core experience at the Sochi Olympic Park leverages interactive Microsoft Kinect games such as ski jumping, cross-country skiing, ice hockey and curling, with four gaming stations set up for users to play each sport. Before these interactive games start, the screen shows an avatar of the player and asks users to tap on their wrist to transform into corresponding players for each sport. This subtly reinforces Under Armour's vision of the future as shown in its "I Will" ad campaign, where a female athlete is depicted changing the color of her clothing using an interface embedded in the fabric. Through interactive experience that shows Under Armour's ambitions in innovation, the RISD team aims to give customers the impression that UA is not just making sportswear, but developing innovations that maximize every athlete's potential.









## IMMERSE | AT OLYMPICS ON-SITE (INTERACTION)



Ski Jumping Interaction Experience



ross-Country Skiing Interaction Experience



Ice Hockey Interaction Experience



Curling Interaction Experience

Screenshots of different Olympic games

People will be able to virtually experience different sport activities triggered by tapping on one's wrist.











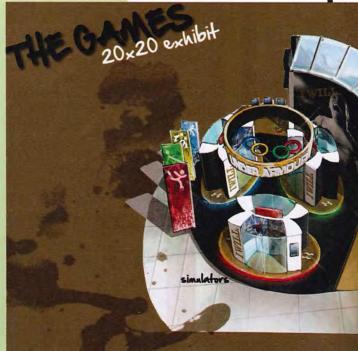
## CONCEPT: I Will Go For Gold TEAM MEMBERS:

Katie Maruszak,

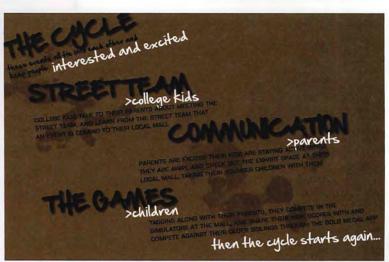
kmaruszak@student.cia.edu Myra Cowan, mcowan@student.cia.edu Kayla Mehalic, kmehalic@student.cia.edu Ivan Ruvolo, nruvolo@student.cia.edu

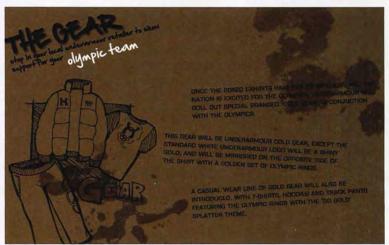
**DETAILS:** The Cleveland Institute of Art team created a campaign that immerses attendees in a mini Olympic Park, leveraging winter sporting event interactive games where users are able to compete for their country. Along with sporting events, users have the ability to support their country by wearing Under Armour gear that is customizable to each team. The "Wall of Gold" allows attendees to share their own personal ambitions of achieving gold by writing their own messages. Given that the experience is set during the winter, Team CIA placed refueling stations that include heat lamps and water for attendees to reenergize. Meanwhile, street teams of brand ambassadors walk around handing out merchandise and directing people to experience the space. On the athletes' off days, there is an opportunity for them to come in to interact with consumers in the UA mini Olympic Park. The accompanying Gold Medal mobile app allows users to be updated with info on UA events across the nation as the 2014 Winter Olympics arrive. The app also allows users to locate local UA street teams, and to enter their own personal fitness goals. After the Games, consumers are informed of local UA events that may include Olympic medalists, as well as new Under Armour promotions and product releases.



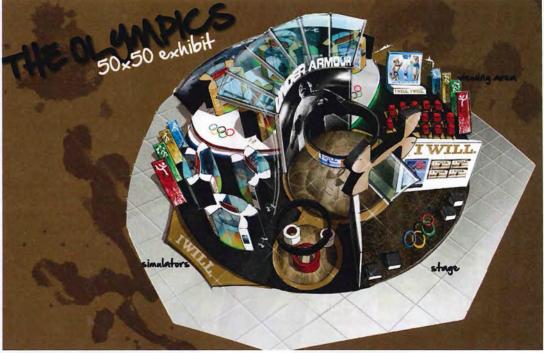












## Art Center College of Design

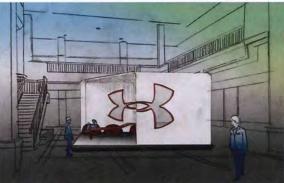


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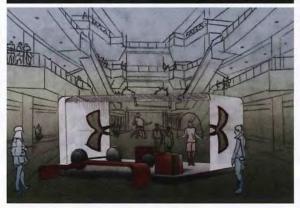
CONCEPT: ZERO MOMENT
TEAM MEMBERS:

Connie Bakshi, connie.bakshi@gmail.com John Clark

**DETAILS:** The Adaptive Engagement Pavilion (AEP) aesthetic is dominated by a single glossy white acrylic enclosure that allows users to visually discover the frosted glass Under Armour logo in a single passing moment. Within this branding element lies a space that both encloses and displays the elevated brand experience. Recurring campaign elements of LED lighting, royal red, charcoal and gray, appear within the space. The 20-by-20-foot experience creates a space that transforms based on the activation schedule in the 100 days prior to the Olympics. For the majority of this time, it acts as "The Armory," a lounge and hotspot that provides a curated interactive retail display of the latest Under Armour gear and technology. The space transforms into the competitive "Test Lab UA" for 10 tournaments within the 100 days prior to the Olympics. At this point, the floor reconfigures into a competitive arena in which contenders are challenged to compete in various games and trials that test their athleticism and mental willpower. The architecture of the 50-by-50-foot pavilion takes a deliberate and bold stance in the Sochi Olympic Park, Form meets function via hard edges and dynamic curvatures, while limits are tested in gravity-defying moves that speak to the timelessness of the ZERO MOMENT. The lower level of the two-story pavilion features an interactive mirror wall that captures user movement, then moves the image upward and abstracts it into the LED display on the ceiling.





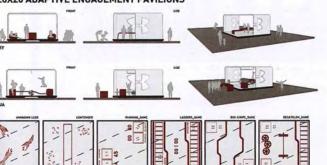








#### 20X20 ADAPTIVE ENGAGEMENT PAVILIONS

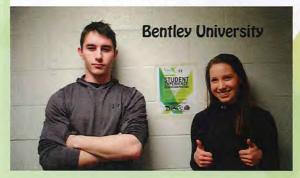


## **★** 50X50 OLYMPIC PAVILION



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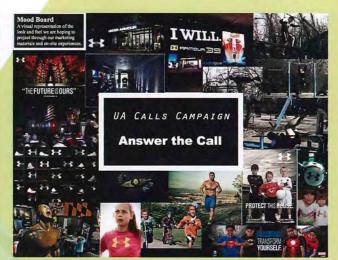


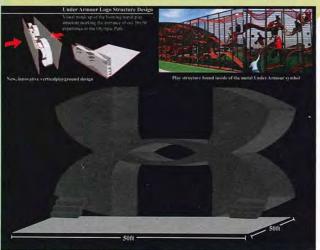


#### **CONCEPT:** Answer the Call **TEAM MEMBERS:**

Matt Somma, somma\_matt@bentley.edu Tricia Reinken, reinken\_tric@bentley.edu

DETAILS: The team from Bentley U was all over this competition from day one, and the pair took home iPads for winning the Brand X Facebook video challenge. The team's overarching theme focuses on getting consumers and event attendees to answer their own personal call of how they can participate in the Olympics. The Bentley team's mall experience includes plenty of UA gear on display, interactive gaming and a photo activation zone where attendees show their support for Team USA while images from inside the booth are displayed on exterior monitors. The Sochi experience is centered around an enormous play structure modeled after the iconic UA logo. A raised stage for presentations and special appearances is the focus of the indoor experience zone, with additional product displays, graphic walls and a photo activation zone rounding out the footprint. The 20-by-20-foot mall experience will be deployed at Spartan Races, Tough Mudder events and marathons leading up to the Olympics, in an effort to spread the word to athletes. All marketing materials and promotions tied to the campaign carry the same consistent messaging, from social media interactions to promotional videos and post-Games engagements. A badge promotion element will encourage online and offline participation, and an incentive program will reward consumers and encourage them to share their experiences across social media.





On-Site Experience Style and Then

**Text Themes** Heading 2

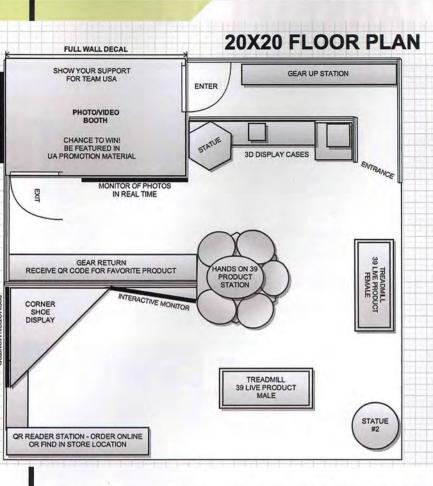
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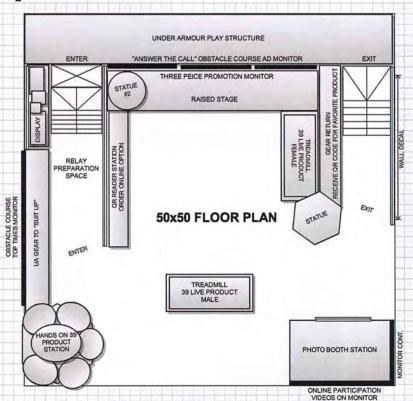


Under Armor Flagship Store - Annapolis, MD Design credit to FRCH Design Worldwide, Cincinnati, OH.

Above represents the visual appeal we are strivin to create within our on-site experiences.









STATUE CLOTHED IN OLYMPIC TEAM USA UNIFORM