

## tru<sup>TV</sup> AWARENESS MONTH

### TruTV Expands March Madness Marketing with PSA-Style Campaign

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TruTV's marketing campaign around March Madness grew from the need to adapt, as once a year, basketball fans cursed under their breath in search of where to watch the first four games of the tournament-and then used social media platforms to curse more loudly at truTV, a network they had never heard of that happened to have exclusive broadcast rights.

"It was a reaction to the huge tsunami of negative activity we used to get at that time," said Puja Vohra, executive vice president of marketing and digital, truTV.

Early on, the network just kind of stood on the sidelines and took it, but beginning with the 2015 social campaign #HaveUFoundtruTV, the brand started talking back, with a mix of self awareness and sarcasm, in a pre-emptive strike to own the conversation with snarky jokes about itself while raising brand awareness.

"They were mean and negative, and we would smack them down and be super nice," Vohra said.

TruTV further leaned into that concept in 2016 with #truTVisAThing, and 2017's #FunnyCauseltstru challenged Internet trolls to up their game with comedic

insults-or the network would do it for them.

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truTV Again Storms Twitter for March Madness with #truTVIsAThing

"It's been a pretty gradual transition," Vohra said about the evolution of the campaign.

But over the past four years, "the negativity has diminished so much, but because brand awareness has gone up," Vohra said. "We have done our job."

That shift paved the way to go even bigger for this year's PSA-style campaign called "truTV Awareness Month." The strategy builds out from social platforms to also include on-air spots and digital extensions, as well as promoting recently expanded access to TruTV on connected devices, VOD and the network's app.

Working with social-led creative agency Movement Strategy, the team created more than 450 video elements which included a mix of clip-based "PSA-style" custom campaign spots that they did with 21 members of the network's talent such as Amy Sedaris, Chris Gethard, Adam Conover, Impractical Jokers and others.

TruTV also leaned heavily into its own programming this year, rather than focusing on just the brand name itself.

"We're really using our content to sample and drive awareness," Vohra said. "Here's all the great stuff about TruTV, and if you're not watching you're missing out."

The spots took two approaches when shooting. First, talent took a more PSA-esq approach about the overall brand, and then they focused in on their individual shows.

While data for the campaign is still being collected-and it's running for the whole month instead of just during March Madness-early analytics show viewership around this year's tournament started off strong-with 5.9 million viewers successfully locating truTV, with minimal complaints, and tuning it to watch the tournament.

For those who still don't know about truTV, the network will be back next year with another iteration.

"At some point, this is going to make the campaign irrelevant," Vohra said. "But that's the whole point of it."