



## **HBO Max Pivots to Virtual Brand Activations for Launch**

**05.29.2020**

When HBO was forced to mix up its marketing plan for the launch of HBO Max in light of stay-at-home orders, it quickly changed what had been planned to be a week of on-the-ground activations into virtual ones.

Emphasizing stay-at-home comfort and luxury via its "Where HBO Meets So Much More" campaign, HBO Max partnered with such brands as home meal-kit delivery services Blue Apron, grocery delivery service FreshDirect, obÃ© Fitness, coffee purveyor Bluestone Lane, Best Friends Animal Society, and Van Leeuwen Artisanal Ice Cream. Together, HBO Max and its brand partners provided subscribers with complimentary food and drink, fitness classes and family-friendly activities.

"We are thrilled to kick off the launch of HBO Max with A Week of So Much More, bringing our beloved shows and movies to some of consumers' favorite brands. Our original vision for our launch week was to excite fans by integrating with their daily lives through physical retail partnerships and activations," said Jason Mulderig, senior vice president, brand marketing, HBO and HBO Max in a statement. "Following stay-at-home orders, we quickly pivoted to partners who could create similar experiences in a safe way for consumers to enjoy from home. We were so impressed with our partners' existing give- back initiatives

that we decided to amplify those through our partnerships as well. From pet adoption, to coffee, to at-home fitness, this So Much More campaign has something for everyone, and we are so excited for the week to roll out."

Each brand partner brought its own offering, starting with Best Friends Animal Society, which hosted its first-ever national virtual adoption event-the Best Friends Virtual Super Adoption-that runs from May 27 through May 31. On the first day of the event, nicknamed "So Much More Companionship," HBO Max helped offset adoption costs for would-be adopters.

Live and on-demand online fitness provider ObÃ© is providing daily workout classes inspired by shows and movies available on HBO Max, including Sex and the City, Euphoria and Sesame Street.

Meal-kit delivery service Blue Apron is providing suggestions for HBO Max-inspired pairings on recipe cards in subscribers' boxes for a week of so much more flavor. The brand also is hosting live virtual cooking tutorials for any level on its Instagram feed.

Similarly, Van Leeuwen Ice Cream customers are getting a special offer, compliments of HBO Max along with suggestions for the perfect scoop to accompany HBO Max titles.

Online payment provider Venmo is debuting HBO Max-inspired stickers themed to trending topics and keywords on the platform, including iconic characters from titles such as Friends, The Wizard of Oz and Doctor Who.

Finally, HBO Max is supporting FreshDirect and New York Common Pantry, matching ongoing consumer donations to help feed the hungry through June 2. It's also working with Australian-inspired coffee purveyor Bluestone Lane on its "Shout A Coffee" initiative, doubling local coffee deliveries to hospitals in New York City, Los Angeles, Boston and Washington D.C. throughout the week. Bluestone baristas also are showcasing latte art celebrating the iconic worlds of HBO Max across Bluestone Lane's social channels.

Streaming service HBO Max launched Wednesday, May 27.

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