



MTV Engages its Viewers for Innovation

Need for Speed is Met Using its Private Community Fueled by Communispace

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"It's also awesome to know that we influence MTV. It's good having a voice and more importantly, having that voice be heard!"

VIEWER 'NOT-SO-REMOTE' CONTROL

Despite its already extensive research program, MTV Research and Planning created its private online community with Communispace in June 2008 in search of the speed they need to fuel their ongoing innovation efforts throughout the organization.

In the "customer in control" world of social media, MTV knew that finding a way to quickly and easily tap into the Voice of the Customer, would enable them to meet their business goal of helping viewers truly connect with their programming, even to directly shape and create it. They found that a community, built and managed by Communispace, was the ideal component to meet this strategic approach.

The community is made up of 300 18–22 year-olds from the US, who offer their input and insights daily to the team at MTV, allowing them to adjust television and web offerings in real time—altering content and strategies at the speed which their target demands. The community is a metaphor for the type of viewer experience MTV strives to create.

RAPID RESPONSE STEALS THE SHOW

MTV uses their community to inform new and existing initiatives every week. The 2008 Video Music Awards were directly influenced by the community. Members were tapped in weeks prior to the VMAs to gauge buzz and expectations. They then provided feedback on the VMA promo campaign to optimize creative and inform a targeted media plan. In two days, MTV gleaned the insight needed to strategize and act quickly. The 2008 VMAs on MTV and MTV2 delivered an 8.05 P12–34 grossed rating, up 26% versus the prior year. On the premiere night, VMA programming reached over 27 million total viewers (p2+).

During the VMAs, members participated in a three hour live chat unearthing reactions in real time, capturing the true experience of the VMAs when viewed on one's own turf.

In another case, MTV used members' input to inform a new live format music show with a user-generated component. The morning after the first Friday night show, almost 100 members had assessed key show elements, enabling changes to the next week's show.

The immediacy and user-generated content aspects of the community make it ideal for this show's unique needs.

Allison O'Keefe-Wright, Vice President, MTV Research and Planning said that the community "gives us the ability to program based on our viewers' wants and needs and to implement change as quickly as the media landscape and our audience demand it. We feel confident that the community's input is going to be key to the success of our many new initiatives. Our members are totally engaged and grateful to have a platform to speak their mind, and we are thrilled to give it to them and to represent their voice. That's something MTV has been dedicated to doing throughout our history."

Community members are equally enthusiastic, here are just a few comments they've made about being part of this unique group of advisors to MTV:

"There's a sense of importance helping giving feedback to MTV, as well being involved in decisions that will help shape the future of MTV."

"This community has been very sensitive to the views and feelings of its members. Being a part of this community and contributing to it is really very rewarding as an MTV V.I.P."

"Throughout my years as an MTV viewer I have always had questions or wondered different things, had opinions and wanted to find a way to voice them. The community has given me a voice, which I very much appreciate. The discussions and surveys that I take part in are what I've been waiting for. I hope it continues."

