

2024 APAC Effie® Awards Grand Effie Winner

Til It's Done

Categories: Media, Entertainment & Leisure (Gold) Events (Gold) Positive Change: Social – Non-Profit (Gold) David vs. Goliath (Situational) (Silver)

Product/Service Classification: Non-Profit Brand: The Matildas Client: Football Australia Lead Agency: Ogilvy Melbourne

Original Version

Executive Summary

On the eve of 100+ years in the shadows, the Matildas, Australia's under-rated and under-supported women's soccer team, took a perfectly timed event and turned it into a tipping point for lasting change.

The breakthrough was in elevating their heroic performance at the first-ever Australian-based World Cup into a rallying cry that ignited the whole nation's passion.

'Til It's Done' was embraced as a defiant and spirited mantra, helping to fill stadiums, set viewership records and inspire lasting change - 12 consecutive sold out matches post the Cup, and \$134 million in additional government funding was secured.

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Market Background

THE EGREGIOUS HISTORY OF SOCCER

Australia is a nation that LOVES sports, but as you'll see in this paper, there's massive inequality in its passion and support across genders. As was the case when it came to soccer [football as it's known internationally].

The gender gap can be traced back 100 years, when in 1921, the UK, Australia, along with the rest of the world, imposed a ban on women playing soccer professionally. The official basis was medical; soccer was too physical for women's bodies. Shockingly this ban spanned 5 whole decades before finally lifting in the 1970s [1].

A TURNING POINT ON THE HORIZON

What followed was another 50 years of entrenched inequalities; women denied basic training facilities, limited coaching, zero public exposure, and hand-me down uniforms [2]. Unbeknownst to them, and on the century eve since the ban, there would be another landmark moment that would forever change the game.

State of the Marketplace & Brand's Business/Strategic Communication Challenge

MEET THE MATILDAS

The mission of Football Australia is to turn our country into a leading football nation. Their remit is managing grassroots programs, nurturing young talent that then progresses into our high-performance national teams to represent Australia on the global stage [3]. One of which is the subject of this paper: our national women's team, the Matildas.

WOMEN'S SOCCER RELIED ON LIMITED SUPPORT

Football Australia's mission relies on government funding [4]. Unfortunately lobbying the government for women's soccer is a tough ask. Why? Because our government is at the behest of what society deems important. And women's soccer was last on society's list [5].

What's worse is their funding to us was declining, going from \$6M per year, down to \$1.55M. Within that SAME timeframe government were spending much more on arguably less "meaningful", albeit shiny crowd-pleasers [6][7]. See Figure 1.

A DEEPLY UNEQUAL SYSTEM

Despite being a nation of sports lovers, the Matildas lacked support from fellow Australians because women's soccer was seen as inferior to men's. This perception resulted in significantly less broadcast opportunities, with less than 10% of coverage going towards the Matildas [8]. As well as regularly playing to near empty stadiums, with record attendance barely reaching 43% capacity [9]. This limited support continually signalled to the government to keep the status quo on funding.

The finite funding meant the female sportsperson's income persistently remained below the LEGAL minimum wage, and half of their male counterparts [10]. See Figure 2.

To sustain the bare standards of living, women had to fit training around full-time work[11]. Many couldn't balance this, so talent would either a) relocate to an overseas team that paid better or b) leave the sport entirely [12].

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It was a vicious cycle that prevented women's soccer from ever breaking through into the upper echelons of professional-tiered sport. And it was a cycle we needed to break, for good.

THE SLIDING DOORS MOMENT

There seemed to be no resolve in sight, until we received the biggest announcement to date - Australia would co- host the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup alongside New Zealand.

A sporting event of such global magnitude would draw eyes from every Australian, and with it the entire world. It would be a captive audience the Matildas never had before. And possibly never will again.

We had a single opportunity: leveraging the World Cup to overturn deeply rooted misconceptions and secure a better future for women's soccer in Australia.



Figure 1



Figure 2

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Objectives & KPIs

We had to use the Matildas moment in the spotlight as an opportunity to deliver long-lasting change, turning a vicious cycle into virtuous cycle. Overturning public perception was key to unlocking critical funding and forever securing the legacy of women's soccer. Therefore our objectives were split into 3 areas:

1. BUSINESS - REVERSE FUNDING DECLINE Target: Reinstate annual funding from \$1.55M to \$6M.

As mentioned, government funding is critical for the development of grassroots talent. Without this, the calibre of national teams ultimately suffers. Unfortunately, in the lead up to the World Cup funding was DECREASED because the global tournament would be using existing infrastructure and with the economic boost anticipated; the government saw it as an opportunity to cut costs [13].

Our fear was that once funding decreases, it would keep falling after the World Cup wraps up. So, our goal was to reinstate funding from \$1.55M to \$6M for 2024. See Figure 3.

2. MARKETING - INCREASE MATCH ATTENDANCE

Target: Increase post-Cup attendance, from 43% to 70% stadium capacity. And 486K viewership average.

To unlock funding we had to signal to government that Aussies were engaged and passionate about the Matildas. To achieve this we had to a) fill up stadiums, and b) increasing broadcast viewership.

Match Attendance

Prior to the Cup, the Matildas competed against the US team (ranked 1st at the time), and despite this, the stadium only filled to 43% capacity - this, however, was an all-time record for the Matildas on home soil [14].

Naturally, World Cup matches would soar to 100% capacity, but our goal was increasing attendance for matches after the Cup. To aim higher than half capacity, we set out to increase post-Cup attendance to 70% capacity. See Figure 4.

Broadcast Viewership

Non-Cup Matildas matches average between 200K-50K [15]. Again, World Cup matches would exceed this (for context 976K tuned in for the men's Cup at the 2am slot) [16], given we were hosting, with more ideal time slots, viewership would easily go into the millions. However, our goal was boosting viewership post-Cup.

Our highest non-Cup viewership was 243K back in 2019 [17]. We set out to double that to 486K for post-Cup matches. See Figure 5.

3. BRAND - OVERTURN PUBLIC INDIFFERENCE Target: Achieve at least 13.14% campaign recall.

The last, but most critical objective was overturning the public indifference that sat at the heart of it all.

To achieve this we had to develop a message that would resonate with the masses. To measure this we used the campaign recall metric.

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Having never run a brand campaign before we had no benchmarks of our own, so we took the category benchmark for entertainment & media, and within that the BVOD format which had the highest recall rate: 13.14% [18].













Sourcing: Section 1

- 1. 'How the FA banned women's football in 1921 and tried to justify it.' Article by The Guardian, 2022.
- 2. 'From hand-me-downs to period proofing, the Matildas' kits reflect the evolution of women's football.' Article by ABC News, 2023.
- 3. 'Who We Are' webpage, Football Australia.
- 4. Legacy '23 Impact Report, Football Australia 2023.
- 5. 'Unsuitable for females and should not be encouraged.' Article by the Australian Geographic 2023.
- 6. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai.
- 7. Contracts Register, City of Sydney database, Accessed 2024.
- 8. 'One simple way to increase coverage of women's sport.' Deakin University, Sports journalism, 2021.

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9. 'Record-breaking 56,604 fans turn out for CommBank Matildas v USA series.' Football Australia, 2021.

- 10. Female and Male Sportsperson Taxable Income, from 2021-22, Australian Tax Office.
- 11. 'Matilda revives 'sad battle' amid jab at A-League women working second jobs.' Article by Canberra Times 2024.

12. 'The Matildas have been pushing to close the football pay gap. It would make a difference for A-League players like Sarah.' Article by ABC News 2023.

- 13. 'Sport Supporting women in sport', Budget 2021-22, Department of Health, Australian Government.
- 14. 'Record-breaking 56,604 fans turn out for CommBank Matildas v USA series.' Football Australia, 2021.
- 15. Mediaweek, TV Ratings, Accessed 2024.
- 16. 'Nearly a million Australians tune in for World Cup final, as viewers shift online.' Article by the Sydney Morning Herald.
- 17. Mediaweek, TV Ratings, Accessed 2024.
- 18. Campaign Effectiveness Study Ad Recall Benchmarks, by EMX 2023.

Audience

THE PRIMARY AUDIENCE

In reality, our ultimate audience was actually the Australian Government. They grant the funds Football Australia needed to fulfil their organisational mission [1].

As mentioned however, the government is at the behest of what the public deems important. The public sways the budget decisions that the government makes. And so, lobbying government directly was futile. We had to address the gatekeepers: the Australian public.

THE GATEKEEPERS WE NEEDED TO SWAY

Engaging Australians on sports is never difficult...except when the sport is women's soccer.

Broadly speaking, Australians relish a high-grade sports spectacle. Unfortunately, this desire to experience high- grade sports is why the Matildas sat outside the realms of the much-loved sporting world [2].

That's not to say that women's sports as a whole was being dismissed [3]. As mentioned previously, sports were stereotypically gendered, with those relying mostly on technique (e.g. swimming, netball, tennis) being seen as more gender-neutral, while those relying of strength and physicality like soccer were seen as the preserve of men [4].

In the minds (and hearts) of the broader public, women's soccer was still a hobby; and their level could never measure up against their male counterparts [5].

Whilst this wasn't an accurate representation of their talent, all previous attempts to engage Aussies fell on deaf ears...until now. With the World Cup arriving to our shores, we knew that it would be the first time in over 100 years that all eyes will be on the Matildas...and in turn, women's soccer as a whole.

Using this rare opportunity, we needed to permanently incite the same emotionally charged advocacy that Aussies exhibit towards other sports.

So we set out to find the emotive lever to pull, allowing us to connect with every Australian, like never before.

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Insight

CONNECTING WITH 25 MILLION AUSSIES

We started to unpack the nation's irrational passion and support of a given sport. After extensive analysis of national sporting archives, we uncovered that it's not about the sport itself, but about what it represents about the nation at its best [6].

For Australians, only one value spoke to this: the belief that everyone deserves a 'fair go' [7].

As a "young" country, we strive to hold our own on the global stage. With Aussies giving it their all, as the nation unites behind them, loud and proud [8].

THE MOOD OF THE NATION HAD FALLEN

Unfortunately, the 'fair go' belief had recently dampened. We were no longer united. COVID had created a distance, physically and emotionally [9]. Socio-economically we were struggling and there was dissatisfaction with an "out of touch" government [10]. And then there was our sports...

In the cricketing world, our team were caught cheating in a ball-tampering scandal [11]. Our basketball team were ejected for participating in a brawl with the Philippines team [12]. And finally, our top tennis player, Nick Kyrgios, was fined by Wimbledon for verbal abuse [13].

What was once a source of great pride that united us, was now polarising us even further.

PLAYING FOR A PLATFORM

Aussies needed to be united and believe once more; and nobody embodied 'fair go' quite like the Matildas.

Whilst others grandstand about supporting inclusivity, and buckle at the last minute, the Matildas do not [14].

Whilst others remained radio silent, the Matildas supported Canada's fight for equal pay [15].

Where others faltered, the Matildas stood strong for their beliefs. A team of unconditional integrity, championing 'fair go' in every sense.

And so our strategic opportunity: use the visibility of the World Cup to unite the nation behind the Matildas, and in turn, secure a bigger, fairer future for women's soccer.

The Big Idea

Unite our nation by transforming the journey of the Matildas from a group of players into a rallying call for change.

Sourcing: Section 2

- 1. Legacy '23 Impact Report, Football Australia 2023.
- 2. 'Australia, the sporting nation.' A study by McCrindle, 2021.
- 3. 'Barty breaks TV ratings records in drought-ending Australian Open win.' An article by The Age, 2022.
- 4. 'Unsuitable for females and should not be encouraged.' Article by the Australian Geographic 2023.

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5. 'Unsuitable for females and should not be encouraged.' Article by the Australian Geographic 2023.

- 6. Sport and Australian Culture (Digital Classes), The National Library of Australia.
- 7. 'What did a 'fair go' originally mean to Australians?' Article by Australian Journal of Political Science, Volume 58, 2023.
- 8. 'Australians love to talk about a 'fair go'. Here's what it meant before we became a nation.' Article by The Conversation, 2024.
- 9. 'Tempers are frayed, we've become a nation divided over Fortress Australia and the Covid-19 response.' Article by The Guardian, 2021.
- 10. 'Cost of living pressures sees social cohesion hit record low.' Study by the Australian National University, 2023.
- 'More than just three involved in 'Sandpaper-gate', says Warner's manager.' Article by Reuters, 2022.
 'National Shame: Who are we if we're not fair?'. Article by News Corp, 2019.
- 13. 'Nick Kyrgios' total fines as outbursts in Wimbledon final earn one last punishment.' Article by the Mirror, 2022.
- We always play with pride: How the Matildas helped pave the way for LGBTQIA+ visibility in football'. Article by ABC News, 2023.
- 15. 'Pay my friends! Why are so many superstars sitting out the Women's World Cup?' Article by The Sydney Morning Herald, 2023.

Bringing the Idea to Life

THE NEW NATIONAL VERNACULAR: 'TIL IT'S DONE'

We needed a way to tell the story of the Matildas - who they were as a team, what they stood for - and we found it, right there in their name: TIL...'Til It's Done'.

Three words perfectly encapsulated the Matildas' refusal to quit until they'd created the platform for change. And although winning the World Cup was a part of it, the 'Til It's Done' mantra was much bigger than the scoreboard.

It summed up everything the team stood for AND it gave the nation a shared language to reconnect as a society once more, with the Matildas at the heart of this.

LAUNCHING WITH AN ANTHEM

A hero TVC set the scene for 'Til It's Done' - documenting the Matildas' heroic and never-ending quest. This wasn't just about victory on the pitch, it was about making a broader impact.

Throughout the TVC, we hear one player's inner monologue, the voice of the whole team, putting words to the ongoing narrative inside their head, forever driving them onwards.

In tandem, we deployed mass OOH coverage. Each creative highlighted a player and their ambition, not just for the World Cup, but for the future of women's soccer.

REIGNITING THE CHALLENGER SPIRIT

As mentioned previously, 'fair go' represents both competitiveness and camaraderie [1]. The engagement phase of our campaign was designed to tap into this passionate challenger spirit. As well as create memorable experiences that made Aussies feel like they were more than just spectators.

We executed a series of activations; OOH placements that featured the Matildas jerseys and soccer balls – all signed by the team – and waiting to be discovered by fans. Clues were given across our Instagram channel. Fans that did find their jersey or soccer ball could then keep it as their own piece of the legacy.

And for those that came to support us at the games we of course had to give them the tools to support us. Fans were given 'Til It's Done' signs that they could use to cheer on the Matildas.

As the Cup progressed, we encouraged Aussies to make their signs, featuring their own goals for equality - to which they did, loud and proud!

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Stadiums were PACKED and wherever you looked people had used the 'Til It's Done' vernacular to share what they are striving to achieve 'Til It's Done'. Then you had some more light-hearted ones, 'I gave up Taylor Swift tickets for the Matildas'...and who could blame them.

THE LOSS THAT TRIGGERED A CULTURAL SENSATION

When the team were knocked out of the semi-finals, we took things to the next level, showing Aussies that this was bigger than the World Cup...it was about shaping what the next 100 years of women's soccer would look like.

We developed a visual that was disseminated across OOH, digital and print. It featured a long list of the team's achievements. Everything the Matildas had already achieved was crossed off.

But there were more achievements on that list that weren't crossed off yet. Because the World Cup was not the end of the road. It was just the start!

The poster catapulted our campaign from sports to a broader cultural conversation...

'Til It's Done' became the number 1 trending hashtag (even our Prime Minister used it in his tweet!) [2]. Engagement rate on the Instagram post hit 7.5% (national benchmark sits at 1.56%!!!!!) [3][4]. Community prompted murals were developed.

And a book titled 'Til It's Done' was published shortly afterwards [5]...heralding what was now being called a historic 'Matilda Effect'. Their story, and motto, forever fused into the threads of our society.

Sourcing: Section 3

- 1. 'What did a 'fair go' originally mean to Australians?' Article by Australian Journal of Political Science, Volume 58, 2023.
- 2. Anthony Albanese Twitter, 7th August 2023.
- 3. Post-Campaign Report, Football Australia 2023.
- 4. Average Engagement Rate Instagram Channel, Entertainment and Media. Report by Hootsuite.
- 5. 'Til It's Done by Matildas. Published: 5th December 2023 by Penguin Australia.

Results

3. BRAND - OVERTURN PUBLIC INDIFFERENCE

Target: Achieve at least 13.14% campaign recall.

Result: 'Til It's Done' campaign messaging achieved an average recall rate of 61% across all activity.

As mentioned, we had to overturn an overwhelming indifference amongst the general public. We used campaign recall rates to measure our impact, and aimed for the highest benchmark (BVOD) within the entertainment & media category, which sits at 13.14% [1].

We exceeded this with a staggering 61% recall rate average of 'Til It's Done' campaign messaging [2].

2. MARKETING - INCREASE MATCH ATTENDANCE

Target: Increase post-Cup attendance, from 43% to 70% stadium capacity. And 486K viewership average. Result: Post-Cup attendance increased to 100% capacity, across the ENTIRE match calendar for 2023 and 2024.

Additionally, viewership average on broadcast increased to over 970K.

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Previously, the Matildas all-time high match attendance was 43% capacity [3]. We wanted to increase this to at least 70% for post-Cup matches. We far exceeded this, reaching 100% capacity for the remaining non-WC matches across 2023 and 2024 (that's 12 games in total all sold-out!!!!) [4]. See Figure 6.

The results for broadcast were equally astounding. We gave ourselves the challenge to double our former record of 243K back in 2019 to 486K for post-Cup matches.

Amazingly, matches AFTER the World Cup achieved an average viewership of over 970K! [5] See Figure 7.

 BUSINESS - REVERSE FUNDING DECLINE Target: Reinstate annual funding from \$1.55M to \$6M.
 Result: Funding increased to \$33.5M annually till 2027 (\$134M in total across 4 years!). See Figure 8.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

In total our campaign investment was \$400K [6]. When we subtract this from the funding received from government (\$33.5M) for 2024 [7], this leaves us with an ROI of 269%

Gross funding increase: \$33,500,000 Profit margin: 4.4% [8] Gross profit increase: \$1,474,000 Campaign costs: \$400,000 Gross profit minus campaign costs: \$1,074,000 ROI: 269%

CONCLUSION

The challenge seemed near impossible, but the opportunity for change was rare and fleeting – so we went ALL in. The Matildas and their story was embraced by a nation looking to reconnect with the very best version of themselves, and to each other as a society. The Matildas became the vehicle for this. And the results after the World Cup were unbelievable...not just for Football Australia, but women's sport more broadly were touched by the ripples of change, a change for good.





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Additional Marketing Components

Business Events (e.g. changes in supply chain, governmental regulations)		Public Relations
Internal Company Events		Other marketing for the brand, running at
(e.g. change in ownership, internal dynamics, etc.)		the same time as this effort
Natural Events	\mathbf{X}	Other: The Matildas' Performance
(e.g. weather, natural phenomenon, etc.)		Other: The Mathdas Tenormance
Societal or Economic Events		
(e.g. changes in economic, political, social factors)		

Other Contributing Factors

Okay SO by now you must be thinking, this sounds great but the Matildas' performance at the World Cup was what achieved the long-lasting impact we've seen.

Yes, their performance did ignite the fandom that we occasionally see when an Australian team exceeds expectations and galvanises the entire community in the process...but past examples of this pale in comparison.

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In EVERY instance the fandom quickly fizzles out. And the level of impact afterwards has been significantly smaller.

The most notable example is the deep run by our men's soccer team at the 2006 World Cup. We saw so much public engagement that the government was compelled to commit an additional \$16M in grants across a 3-year period [9]. A far cry from \$134M!

The Matildas alone couldn't have achieved the same level of impact. The fandom that their performance stirred up would have also fizzled out. But it didn't because of our campaign. We used the fandom as our launchpad to have a far more impactful conversation.

A campaign that touched on a deeply vital cultural truth - the Matildas became the vehicle to reignite our passion for equality. And 'Til It's Done' became the national mantra that continues to unite us.

Sourcing: Section 4

- 1. Campaign Effectiveness Study Ad Recall Benchmarks, by EMX 2023.
- 2. Post-Campaign Report, Football Australia 2023.
- 3. 'Record-breaking 56,604 fans turn out for CommBank Matildas v USA series.' Football Australia, 2021.
- 4. 'Matildas sell out 12th-straight stadium for Olympics qualifier.' Article by The Guardian, 2024.
- 5. Mediaweek, TV Ratings, Accessed 2024.
- 6. Post-Campaign Report, Football Australia 2023.
- 7. Post-Campaign Report, Football Australia 2023.
- 8. Football Australia Limited, AU & NZ Enterprise Profiles Report 2023, IBISWorld.
- 9. 'Big cash boost for football.' Article by Fox Sports, 2009.

Media Addendum

Paid Media Expenditures

Current Year: 2023		Year Prior: 2022		
□ Under \$100K	□ \$1M - under \$5M	🗵 Under \$100K	□ \$1M - under \$5M	
□ \$100K - under \$250K	□ \$5M - under \$10M	□ \$100K - under \$250K	□ \$5M - under \$10M	
🗵 \$250K - under \$500K	□ \$10M - under \$20M	□ \$250K - under \$500K	□ \$10M - under \$20M	
□ \$500K - under \$1M	□ \$20M and over	□ \$500K - under \$1M	□ \$20M and over	
		Not Applicable		

Compared to other competitors in this category, this budget is:					
Less	About the same	More	\times	Not Applicable	
Compared to overall spend on the brand in prior year, the budget this year is:					

□ Less □ About the same ⊠ More □ Not Applicable

Football Australia is the only not-for-profit government body for soccer, therefore there's no competitor we could look at within the category to compare budgets with.

Previously brand building had ZERO budget - however 2023 was an exception because we had to generate interest towards the World Cup.

50% of our budget was donated media placements because broadcast channels had skin in the game – meaning if they could help generate interest in the Matildas, they would get a lot of eyeballs on their primetime slots. The other 50% was utilised on the production of the various campaign assets.

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Owned Media

The Football Australia social channels, more specifically Facebook and Instagram were the only owned channels we used during the campaign period.

Sponsorships

NA

Communications Touchpoints

Branded Content - Editorial	Digital Mktg SEM	Print - Magazine	
Branded Content - Product Placement	🗆 Digital Mktg SEO	Print - Newspaper	
□Cinema	🗵 Digital Mktg Short Video (:15-3 min.)	Public Relations	
Contests	🗵 Digital Mktg Social: Organic	🗆 Radio	
🗆 Digital Mktg Affiliate	🗌 Digital Mktg Social: Paid	Retail Experience: Digital	
Digital Mktg Audio Ads	🗌 Digital Mktg Video Ads	Retail Experience: In Store	
Digital Mktg Content Promotion	Direct Mail	Sales Promotion, Couponing & Distribution	
🗌 Digital Mktg Display Ads	Events	□ Sampling/Trial	
Digital Mktg Email/Chatbots/Text/Messaging	Health Offices / Point of Care	Sponsorships - Entertainment	
🛛 Digital Mktg Gaming	□ Influencer / Key Opinion Leader	□ Sponsorships - Sports	
Digital Mktg Influencers	Interactive / Website / Apps	□ Sponsorships - Unique Opportunity	
Digital Mktg Location based	□ Internal/In-Office Marketing	□ Street Mktg.	
Digital Mktg Long Video (3+ min.)	Loyalty Programs	☐ Trade Shows, Trade Communications, Professional Engagement	
🗌 Digital Mktg Marketplace Ads	🗵 OOH - Billboards	Π τν	
🗌 Digital Mktg Mobile	OOH - Other Outdoor	User Generated Content & Reviews	
Digital Mktg Product Placement	OOH - Transportation		
Digital Mktg Programmatic Display Ads	Packaging & Product Design	⊠ Other: Stadium Audience Signage	
Digital Mktg Programmatic Video Ads	Print - Custom Publication		

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