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McDonald's and Top Chef: a successful branded-content campaign

Background

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This week's egtabite focuses on two trends often discussed in marketing: *multi-screen branded content* and *the relationship between agencies, clients and sales houses*.

In a period when advertisers are working on new ways to engage with consumers and improve their brand image, McDonald's searched for an innovative concept on the Spanish market to help change their "non-healthy fast food" image. With this in mind, the media group Atresmedia decided to integrate the brand into *Top Chef*, one of its most successful prime time programmes with a strong and well-established quality image.

The concept

The link between *Top Chef* and McDonald's was crystal clear: food. The link with quality and healthy food was less obvious and needed to be integrated seamlessly into the programme. Atresmedia, the agency OMD and the advertiser worked together to create an extensive marketing action around a new *Top Chef* variant of the existing *McExtrem* range of high-quality, Spanish-made hamburgers. One of *Top Chef*'s weekly challenges was devoted to the creation of the best *McExtrem Top Chef* burger, and the winner would see their creation sold in all of McDonald's Spanish facilities (460 restaurants). This promise left McDonald's and the agency with a challenge over the summer: to create the entire campaign,



obtain a licence and introduce the necessary ingredients into the production line.



For this tailor-made, cross-platform project, Atresmedia and OMD worked closely together. The various departments of the sales house – including Marketing, Sales, Special Ads and Programming – had to combine their efforts to make this campaign a success. Interestingly, the budget allocated to special ads was three times greater than that devoted to traditional advertising for this campaign. For instance, in addition to product placement and sponsoring, consumers could access exclusive content (behind-the-scenes videos, anecdotes from the show's participants, etc.) on second-screen devices, thus building on their enthusiasm and creating strong involvement and open dialogue. An additional feature of the Atresmedia app offered viewers the chance to vote for their favourite creation, with free burgers for those whose votes matched the jury's decision.

Results

This campaign was a great success. With 590,000 impressions (online and on mobile), 43,000 clicks, 3.7 million viewers and a 170% increase in McDonald's mentions on Twitter, Atresmedia hit the nail on the head in incorporating this brand into the *Top Chef* program. When asked, 84% of *Top Chef* viewers remember having seen a hamburger recipe in the show and 74% of them managed to attribute it to McDonald's, while 88% of them claimed they were willing to try the new hamburger.





Why does this matter to egta members?

Too often neglected, the creative collaboration between agencies, clients and channels/sales house is a crucial aspect of a successful campaign. Atresmedia took the time to work closely with everyone, resulting in an original branded content campaign, tailored to the client's needs and perfectly integrated into the story telling of the programme. Sales houses need best-case studies such as this one to encourage clients to invest in special ads, dare to take a leap of faith hand-in-hand with their agency and sales house and innovate in TV advertising. In a world where multi-screening has now become standard, it is important for broadcasters to position television as a medium that creates a dialogue with consumers and to show the power of high quality TV content working alongside its digital extensions.



Video

Please click on the link [here](#) to see the video about the campaign



Background info

Please click on the links below to access the relevant documents:

- » **Article about campaign on Atres's website** (please click [here](#))
- » **Press article about the campaign** (please click [here](#))