

Working With Microsoft:
Windows 8 Digital Launch Campaign



SYDNEY



COPENHAGEN



AUSTIN



Client Profile: Microsoft

Founded in 1975, Microsoft Corporation is the world's largest software maker by revenues. The US company is best known for its Windows line of operating systems. Other flagships products include the Microsoft Office software suite, Xbox gaming console and Internet Explorer browser, with the company also providing a diverse range of IT solutions and services. As of 2013, Microsoft had about 100,000 employees and revenues of more than US \$77 billion.

Partnering with the World's Most Valuable Company

Working with a product that carries the seal of the Microsoft legacy requires meticulous planning and caution with all players involved. For the digital launch of Windows 8, GraphicPeople was tasked with producing Flash and rich media banners, Flash video for kiosks, electronic direct mailers (EDMs) and landing pages for internet presence. The sheer coordination and technical aspects associated with the digital launch of the world's most popular operating system meant that every step of the process had to be correctly implemented the first time. Project briefs had to be spot on and contingency plans had to be seamlessly integrated in case of a lapse in the production cycle. However, these complexities were dwarfed by another simple but critical challenge: time.

Work Cut Out

Microsoft Windows 8 Operating System Digital Launch Campaign, simultaneous activation across 21 Asian countries in 12 languages, a total of 1300 production units, within 10 working days.

Delivering to Microsoft: The Challenge

"The delivery timeline was the key challenge" says Sahariar Hannan Jitu, Director of Digital Production at GraphicPeople. "Given the scale of work and the fact that the client was Microsoft, there was little room for error." Along with the tight deadline there was also the task of setting up a large expert team within short notice and adhering to Microsoft consistency and quality benchmarks for each unit produced. The short timeline also meant the expert team had to understand output requirements in one go and produce final products the first time round; there would no time for experimentation or

mistakes. Since communication would also be a critical aspect for ensuring quality, the studio needed to adopt a streamlined feedback system for client-agency interaction and quick turnaround time.

How GraphicPeople Helped

GraphicPeople's experience with optimizing workflows and its team of experienced professionals helped the digital production unit smoothly roll out this massive project. Holistic planning was essential, delivery dates were staggered with review/feedback windows for each project sub-group, and with each project having an integrated contingency plan. Apart from being experts in their fields, the digital team also needed to act as coordinators given the different stakeholders involved in the process. At the beginning of the production chain the team received an image file with an outline of the creative concept for the banners. From this master concept, the Flash banners were then produced. Since the banners were published through different agency networks, there were different specifications and deployment needs and all collaterals needed to be customized accordingly. An example of a hiccup and its successful rectification in this dynamic workflow was banner compatibility with Google's ad-serving platform and its DoubleClick technology. Earlier, because of a communication gap during the media buying process, GraphicPeople did not receive scripting specifications from the agency side for ad placement utilizing DoubleClick technology, so banners sent to Google did not work. The digital team's optimized workflow process quickly rectified this within a short time and resent DoubleClick compatible banners to Google within the deadline. Besides, each country had specific deployment criteria for the digital launch and the GraphicPeople team successfully produced customized output for each requirement which was a combination of adaptation and localization of the main creative theme.

Tools/Software in Practice

- Adobe Photoshop and SiteCatalyst
- Flash
- HTML
- CSS
- DoubleClick
- MediaMind

Communications planning was also a vital component that helped to save precious time. Given the work traffic, information flows between client and the studio had to be as optimized as possible. Addressing this, the planning team at GraphicPeople chalked out a communication framework on how briefs should be set and how product feedback should be framed to ensure quick implementation. It was decided that during communication of feedback on all digital work there would be no descriptive emails, instead just screenshots would be sent to the client side for review. The client was requested to follow a similar practice, marking their feedback on the screenshots and sending it back. This practice eliminated the need to compose narrative emails and enabled quicker turnaround times. A dedicated 16-member team worked in three shifts, 18 hours a day, for the digital launch of Microsoft Windows 8.

Bangladesh, the studio's time zone management helped optimize product review, feedback and brief preparation sessions with colleagues in Singapore, which was two hours ahead of Dhaka time. Products were readied for review early morning in Dhaka so that review and feedback could be completed during the first half of the working day in Singapore. New product briefs were sent out to Dhaka during the second half of the day. In all, planning, communication and delivery schedules all came together perfectly for the launch of the world's most popular line of computer operating systems.

"Working with a great company like Microsoft has made us all learn and grow during this project" says Imtiaz Ilahi, Managing Director of GraphicPeople. "And working with a great brand like Windows has inspired us to sustain GraphicPeople's excellent track record of delivering mega projects within near-impossible timelines."

Benefits Delivered

- Centralized, cost-saving, quick execution across 21 countries, in 12 languages.
- Customized workflow, communication and contingency plans helped to cut down review and delivery times.
- The studio's flexible setup allowed an expert team to be deployed at short notice and hit the ground running.

Results Delivered

Ten working days and 4000 man-hours later GraphicPeople's 16-member digital production team delivered 1300 production units of Flash banners and videos, EDMs and webpages for the launch of Microsoft Windows 8 in 21 countries across Asia in 12 languages. Operating from Dhaka,

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