

## ***I. Business Situation and Objectives***

### **Restart the heartbeat of I LOVE NEW YORK**

#### *The Legacy*

It was 1977. New York State was in a deep economic slump and New York City was crime-ridden and bankrupt. In desperation, the State turned to Madison Avenue with a budget of only \$400,000 to see what they could do to make terrified tourists reconsider. The response they got was likely not what they were looking for, but indeed fundamental to the resulting campaign: “With that amount...we can do some research.”<sup>1</sup> The State decided to take a chance and spend their entire budget on consumer research. Armed with the results, they went to the Legislature and convinced them to invest \$4 million, at the time an astounding sum, with the promise of bringing in \$8 million in revenue for the State.

The resulting advertising was a star-studded extravaganza. Entire casts of Broadway shows and A-list celebrities like Frank Sinatra and Liza Minnelli declared their love of New York in TV commercials the public couldn’t get enough of. Steve Karmen wrote a song that made hearts soar. Hot-shot designer Milton Glaser created a soon-to-be-famous logo. And in that year alone, the I LOVE NEW YORK campaign brought in \$28 million in revenue for the State.<sup>2</sup>

#### *The Challenge*

Thirty years later, the celebrated I LOVE NEW YORK campaign had devolved into a shadow of its former self. Politics had gotten in the way of good work. Budgets fluctuated unpredictably. New York State governors starred in unremarkable TV commercials which ran primarily in-state. No consumer research was done, except for a mandated brand tracking study, which revealed that the ads did little to promote New York as a travel destination. Recall of the governors themselves was impressive however.<sup>3</sup>

The government-as-usual approach came to a screeching halt in January 2007, when a new administration took leadership with a mission to reform State politics and apply brand discipline to marketing the State. New ground rules were set:

1. Empire State Development (ESD) would be run like a business. Decisions would be made based on consumer research rather than tradition or instinct.
2. ESD’s marketing communications would get results – measurable, revenue-generating results.

The trademark I LOVE NEW YORK logo, one of the most recognizable in the travel industry, belongs to the State of New York. But the logo had taken on a life of its own, proliferating on souvenirs sold throughout New York City. This was great for the City where tourism was booming, but ESD needed to use this icon to promote tourism throughout New York State. In fact, tourism is *more important* economically to other regions of the State than it is to the City. While it constitutes less than 9% of employment in New York City, tourism accounts for up to 18% of employment in some areas of the State.<sup>4</sup>

With a modest budget of \$8 million, the Agency was charged with reviving the I LOVE NEW YORK campaign for the benefit all of New York, not just the City. **Our marketing challenge was to bring the magnetism and mystique of I LOVE NEW YORK to the entire State.**

Our objectives were to:

#### **1) Make I LOVE NEW YORK a New York State brand, not just a New York City icon.**

- Increase the proportion of people in the target audience who thought of New York State when they saw the I LOVE NEW YORK tagline by 24%.

#### **2) Get a larger share of the 80M leisure travelers living within a 5-hour drive thinking about New York State as a travel destination.**

- Increase unaided recall of the campaign by a statistically significant 4.5 percentage points.
- Deliver statistically significant improvements in desired image attribute ratings.

#### **3) Increase travel within the State.**

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<sup>1</sup> Empire State Development historical film, 2003.

<sup>2</sup> Empire State Development historical film, 2003.

<sup>3</sup> “I LOVE NY” Brand Tracker, Colwell & Salmon Communications, 2006.

<sup>4</sup> *The Economic Impact of Tourism in New York State*. Tourism Economics, an Oxford Economics Company, July 2008.

- Increase revenue for hotels in New York State, not just in the City, by 5%.
- Increase visits to [iloveny.com](http://iloveny.com), which features information about the State and directs to partner sites where travelers can book trips, by 40%.

## ***II. Research Story***

### Bringing the State out of the shadows of the City

Determined to leverage tourism to grow the economy Statewide, ESD set about identifying the marketing opportunity. Inspired by the creators of the original I LOVE NEW YORK campaign, we too made a significant investment in consumer research designed to meet several broad objectives:

1. Identify brand image-building opportunities and barriers by gauging perceptions of the State of New York as a leisure travel destination.
2. Similarly, assess current associations with the I LOVE NEW YORK trademark.
3. Understand the process consumers go through when planning a leisure trip so that we could plan our media most effectively.
4. Identify leisure traveler segments that would be most likely to visit New York State, in order to define the target audience for communications.

### *Window Into The Traveler's Soul*

We began with an international qualitative exploratory study to unearth the attitudes and behaviors that would later be quantified in a global segmentation study. In New York City, Cleveland, Toronto, and London, groups of leisure travelers shared with us the emotional rewards of leisure travel. They brought with them collage-style journals documenting their favorite trips. Many of them really poured their hearts out and it became clear to us that there were a range of powerful motivations and emotions attached to leisure travel. They also gave us insight into the various stages of planning a vacation and sources of information they turn to, many of which exist online.

For better or for worse, we learned that while the famous logo was well-known and respected, it represents the City of New York alone-- not the entire State. Moreover, the image of the State itself ranged from fair to poor. In New York City, people thought it was beautiful but inhospitable to City folks. Cleveland residents didn't know what New York offered that Ohio did not. In Toronto, they associated New York State only with the working-class cities of Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse. In London, leisure travelers didn't even know the State existed and imagined it must be entirely covered in concrete and asphalt. We clearly had our work cut out for us.

### *Global Roadmap*

An extensive online survey called the Global Roadmap followed. It was fielded among 4,604 leisure travelers in the US, Canada, UK, Germany, and Japan. The data gathered in this comprehensive study was used to guide our creative and media strategies. The study covered:

- The trip planning process
- Perceptions of NYS, competitor states and Canadian provinces
- Types of leisure travel destinations and preferred activities
- Emotional and functional drivers of leisure travel

The Global Roadmap revealed three segments to prioritize: Eclectic Adventurers, travelers who love to go off the beaten path; Family Weekenders, travelers looking for affordable family destinations; and Guided Groupies, cultural aficionados who prefer guided tours. While there had been hopes of capturing the many international tourists that were already traveling to New York City, the research showed that the New York State product itself could not deliver the experience many of them were looking for. Given our modest budget, we decided to focus on the 80 million potential travelers who lived within a five-hour drive of New York. The survey confirmed that they preferred short, drive-to "getaways" instead of the traditional weeklong vacation.

### *Product Immersion: Traveling the State*

The problem was evident: when most people heard the words "New York," they thought "City," not "State." We knew we had to find a way to make this paradigm work to our advantage. We continued our research on a grass roots level by visiting every one of the State's eleven regions. We toured cities, small towns, museums, parks, restaurants, inns, and talked to the people who run them. We discovered some hidden gems, like the vineyards of the Finger Lakes and the

stunning Letchworth State Park. But what was equally striking to us was the New York attitude we experienced first-hand.

Unlike its neighboring states and provinces, New York was founded by capitalists, the first Dutch settlers in New Amsterdam. Our towns aren't just quaint; they're industrious. Even today, whether you go to Buffalo or Brooklyn, you'll find a common ethos that springs from that history -- a spirit of striving for excellence, openness to new ideas, pushing the boundaries.

This palpable vibe was what people already loved most about the New York they knew, the City. And it was equally alive in the parts of the State they didn't know. Our strategy was to spread this abundance of character to other regions of the state. We challenged our creative teams to cast the City's aura of unexpected adventure over the rest of New York State.

#### *Creative Development: A Bumpy Road to Success*

The first round of creative used TV and print to visually compare the thrill of a well-known New York City attraction with that of a lesser-known Upstate one. The copy reinforced this by reminding the traveler that there was "more" to New York than just the City. We brought the work to Communications Checks screened for our three priority segments in Toronto, Cleveland, and New York City and unfortunately learned that was all that consumers got from it, as well. The advertising was more of a "reminder" to them. They weren't seeing the State differently; they were just seeing it again after having forgotten about it for a while. A rare few were enthusiastic about visiting the State, but mostly for nostalgic reasons. We knew we could do better -- that the strategy demanded more.

Disappointed but undeterred, we went back to our creative teams and briefed them with the learning from the Communications Checks. We showed them how the previous round of work had fallen flat, that simply juxtaposing the City with the State did not change people's feelings about taking a vacation there. We pushed them to take the work to a more emotional place in order to convey the idea that both the City and State share the same energy and personality. We also urged them to be more daring, to make a departure from the typical photography-driven tourism advertising. While consumers had told us that they liked to see the beautiful shots of vacation destinations, when we asked them how memorable the ads were, they were less than enthusiastic. We knew that if we showed people something truly different it would stand out.

The teams came back with advertising that delivered on the uniquely New York attitude we had identified in our creative brief. With time and money in short supply, we squeezed in one more round of communications checks in New York City and Pittsburgh to be sure we had a campaign that not only looked unique, but also spoke to leisure travelers in a compelling, authentic New York voice. After responses of surprise and delight from both markets, we had our new campaign.

### ***III. Campaign Description***

#### **Another Reason, I LOVE NEW YORK**

The relaunch of the I LOVE NEW YORK campaign leveraged the traveler's existing love of New York City and added a new proposition: that New York State offered a different, inherently New York kind of adventure that gave them "another reason" to explore the State that is home to the City.

Using the direct voice and witticisms of a New Yorker, the ads reflected a personality that people were already familiar with. A print ad featuring the State's wine region took on the character of a typically neurotic New Yorker, stressing about whether they've got what it takes to succeed, "*You think you've got problems? Try being one of the hundreds of vineyards in New York State...Did I grow the best grapes? Did I check the vats? Did I leave the stove on?*"

The art direction broke the mold by avoiding the stock tourism photography considered *de rigueur* in the category and instead employing deep-hued illustrations that utilize famous New York City icons to create the beautiful scenery of New York State. The more you looked at the illustrations, the more you discovered. They made literal the idea that you need to have a broader perspective to really know New York.

Individual executions within the campaign were developed to speak to each of the three priority segments identified in the Global Roadmap. For example, the Vineyard ad spoke to Eclectic Adventurers; the Winter Mountains ad spoke to Family Weekenders; and the Historic Mansions ad spoke to Guided Groupies.

As for the famous logo, it was modernized in a dozen iterations also designed to get travelers to look at it with fresh eyes. Symbols of other regions of the State were incorporated: a squirrel sat on the “Y”; in winter, the “NY” was topped with snow. A tiny bunch of grapes grew off the “Y” in another execution. These logos came to life in animated online ads.

*Media Shake-Up*

Continuing the shake-up of the government-as-usual approach, the new media plan completely eliminated TV advertising. Guided by the findings of the Global Roadmap, the media planners embraced digital media, investing 50% of their budget in search, web partnerships, online advertising, and micro-sites. While not exciting to legislators, the shift was totally consistent with the way travelers were actually planning trips. Digital media was scheduled to ensure that the State’s message got out early and drove internet traffic prior to each season – when we had learned travelers were actually booking trips. Meanwhile, print was used to complement the digital media and build a continuous brand message throughout the year.

Continuing its march into the digital age, ESD overhauled its printed travel guide. We had learned through the exploratory qualitative and Global Roadmap study that far fewer people were using printed travel guides. Instead, most did their research online. At a quarter of the pages of the old Travel Guide, the new slim Getaway Guide was 40% cheaper and reduced paper consumption by 90%.<sup>5</sup> When people were actually ready to plan the details of their trip, they could visit iloveny.com to build a customized downloadable Personal Travel Guide based on season, region, and their own travel preferences.

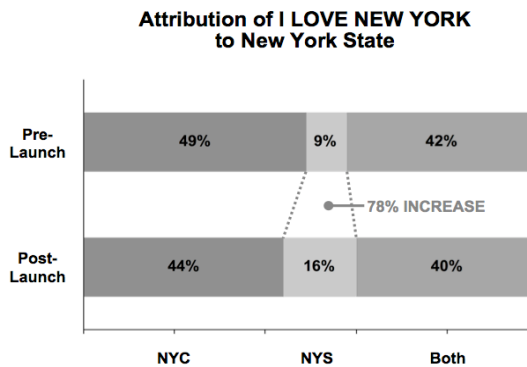
The brand campaign was launched May 6, 2008 and continues to run.

**IV. Business Results**

The relaunched I LOVE NEW YORK campaign **exceeded all established campaign goals**, making a highly-publicized entry back into the category and promoting economic development in the State.

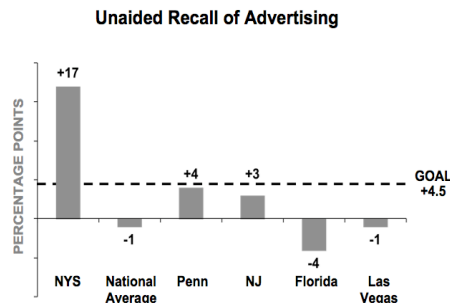
**1) Make I LOVE NEW YORK a New York State brand, not just a New York City icon.**

- There was a 78% increase in the number of people who said they thought of the **State, rather than the City** when they saw the I LOVE NEW YORK tagline.<sup>6</sup> This more than tripled the pre-established goal of a 24% increase.



**2) Get leisure travelers living within a 5-hour drive thinking about New York State as a travel destination.**

- **Unaided recall of the campaign** exceeded the goal, increasing 17 percentage points, from 4% to 21%. In contrast, recall of competitor states’ ads remained flat or decreased.<sup>7</sup>



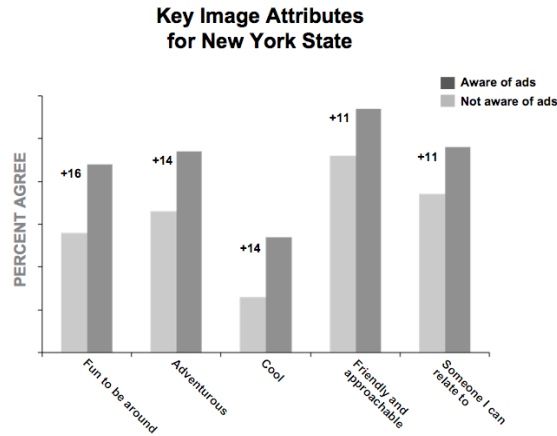
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<sup>5</sup> Empire State Development budget.

<sup>6</sup> I LOVE NEW YORK Brand Tracking Study, Hall and Partners, August 2008.

<sup>7</sup> I LOVE NEW YORK Brand Tracking Study, Hall and Partners, August 2008.

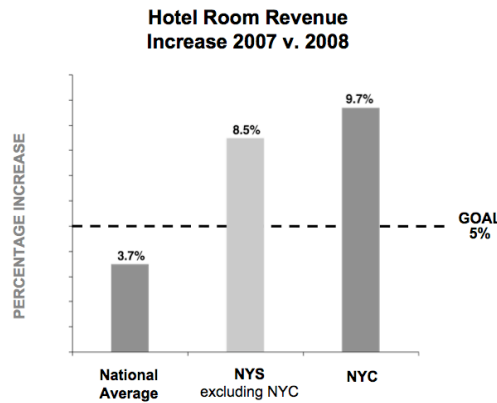
- Ratings for New York State’s **key image attributes** were **significantly higher** for those aware of the ads versus those who were not.<sup>8</sup>



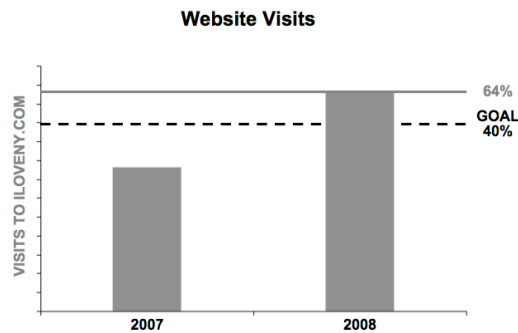
- In addition, the campaign’s launch generated **massive publicity**; with 87 broadcast media hits in the first day alone and over 80 million total audience impressions since launch, equaling \$3 million in total publicity value.<sup>9</sup>
- Beyond our set goals, **consideration of New York State as a destination for their next trip** increased 17% with the launch of the brand campaign.<sup>10</sup>
- And among those aware of the ads, 17% more respondents said that New York State is “better” than other destinations.<sup>11</sup>

### 3) Increase travel within the State.

- **Hotel room revenues** in the State, excluding the City, increased by 8.5%. meanwhile, the rest of the nation saw declines in room sales and a meager 3.7% increase in room revenue in 2007 (which is less than inflation.)<sup>12</sup>



- Traffic to iloveny.com was up 64% over the year prior to the relaunch.<sup>13</sup>



<sup>8</sup> I LOVE NEW YORK Brand Tracking Study, Hall and Partners, August 2007.

<sup>9</sup> BurrellesLuce; Broadcast media outlet standard rates.

<sup>10</sup> I LOVE NEW YORK Brand Tracking Study, Hall and Partners, August 2007.

<sup>11</sup> I LOVE NEW YORK Brand Tracking Study, Hall and Partners, August 2007.

<sup>12</sup> The Economic Impact of Tourism in New York State. Tourism Economics, an Oxford Economics Company, July 2008.

<sup>13</sup> Google Analytics.