



HBCU Classic Tour boosts sales, engagement for Molson Coors Beverage Company

Introduction

Molson Coors Beverage Company has been the go-to beer brand for more than 200 years. Known for its various beer brands, including the popular Coors Light, the company was challenged with breaking into a new target market beyond its historically traditional markets. As a result, the company partnered with Orlando-based experiential marketing firm Aclipse Marketing in an effort to present a new out-of-the-box strategy to attract and build brand loyalty among multiculturally diverse and urban consumers.

The Story of Molson Coors Beverage Company

Molson Coors Beverage Company, formerly known as MillerCoors, is a globally recognized beverage company. Long known as a beer producer, in recent years, the company has expanded its portfolio to offer a range of beverage brands beyond beer, including a variety of seltzers and non-alcoholic beverages.



The “Challenge” of Molson Coors increasing customer engagement in urban and multicultural markets

Molson Coors has a loyal brand following and is very attuned to changes in trends and subsequently its target audience. In 2016, the company was seeking to expand beyond its traditional markets and further its reach in market share and sales with urban and multicultural consumers. In order to have success in attracting multicultural consumers and increasing engagement, Molson Coors reached out to Aclipse Marketing, an experiential marketing firm in Orlando with known ties to Molson Coors’ desired target audience.

Why Molson Coors Chose Aclipse Marketing

Molson Coors sought partnership with a company with established ties to the urban and multicultural communities throughout the Southeast. In addition, Molson Coors wanted to secure a firm with proven strategies in customer engagement through experiential activations. Aclipse Marketing was the premier choice because of its out-of-the-box thinking and connections to the HBCU community network in multiple regions.

How Aclipse Marketing Responded

Aclipse Marketing was tasked to provide six Coors Light-sponsored HBCU Football Classic VIP Tailgate Experiences. Through partnerships created over more than 20 years of business, Aclipse was able to tap into a long list of connections in the Southeast. Through various multiculturally diverse civic and community organizations, and most importantly, the HBCU network, in total, more than 6,000 specially invited guests and community leaders attended the inaugural 2016 Coors Light VIP Tailgate Experiences.

The company's strategy was to provide an interactive, immersive experience that would heighten customer engagement and brand loyalty with a series of on-premises and off-premises events. Guests were given the VIP treatment and received custom invitations and a ride to the location in VIP shuttles. They even had access to their own exclusive VIP restrooms, complete with a restroom attendant.

Guests could get a drink of their choice from one of the branded mobile bars or grab a snack and a "Cooking with Beer" demonstration from Chef Jason Ellis, a local caterer with a bunch of beer recipes up his sleeve. This all went down at the fully wrapped mobile kitchen.

Now we can't leave out the best part — the entertainment. Local and national celebrities were on the scene, and iconic DJ D-Nice entertained the crowd with the first ever "HBCU Classic DJ Battle" along with Atlanta personalities DJ Traci Steele and Kenny Burns.

Brand ambassadors were on hand to move the crowd and help out with custom promotional giveaways, which also helped drive pledges. The event was complete with a social media kiosk and photo booth so guests could forever capture their experience at the Coors Light Tailgate Experience.

The Results

The 2016 HBCU Classic Tours was a proven success, with most markets surpassing attendance from previous years' events. The hidden jewel was the "Cooking with Beer" consumer interaction, which helped drive beer sales at retail. The lower attendance in some markets was attributed to inclement weather. Despite lower attendance in some markets due to bad weather, overall impressions on social media increased, indicating a definite increase in engagement from this target audience. In 2016, the HBCU Classic Tours generated more than **\$200 million dollars of economic impact** in local markets over a 4 month period.

In total, over the 10-year duration of the HBCU Classic Tours, Aclipse Marketing executed **110 activations** in **11 different cities** and sponsorship donations to HBCUS amassed to **\$4.5 million**.

Notable Mentions

Southern Heritage Classic

- **More than half of event patrons (50.4%)** were visitors to the Memphis area
- Brought more than **\$21 million of economic impact** to the area
- The premier sports and entertainment event in Memphis, creating a **strong economic impact** and **promoting higher education**.

Magic City Classic

- Targeted accounts reported **sales of over 400%** during classic week, including, but not limited to, Walmart and Sam's Club retailers
 - During the game, approximately **64,000 attendees** inside the stadium; more than **100,000 attendees** outside the stadium
 - "It went from about **\$13 million to a \$25 million in economic impact** in this area."
- Birmingham Mayor William Bell

Florida Blue Florida Classic

- Total beer sales for Florida Citrus Bowl was **\$400,000 up \$160,000 vs. YAG**
- **150% increase - \$240,000 increase**
- Coors Light, Miller Lite and Blue Moon are now on the catering menu for Levy
- **More than 500 cases of beer** were pre-ordered for the Florida Citrus Bowl Suites
- Coors Light **sales up +8.05%** total market the 2 weeks leading up to the Florida Blue Florida Classic

Bayou Classic

- First time Coors Light outdoor tailgate at the Mercedes-Benz Superdome during Bayou Classic
- Bayou Classic had the **largest attendance increase of 5,055 fans** in 2015 vs. 2014
- Entertainer Mannie Fresh drove **1,000+ VIP fans** to the Retailer's Party in the St. Charles Room

SWAC Championship

- First Coors Light tailgate at NRG Stadium
- Entertainers Big Tigger and Juicy J **drove fans to Coors Light tailgate**
- **Hundreds of fans** lined up for Chef Jason's specially created menu prepared at the Coors Light Mobile Kitchen

Call-to-Action

If you want to give your customers an immersive, interactive experience, and at the same time boost their engagement and brand loyalty, visit aclipsemarketing.net or contact James Stillwell, jstillwell@aclipsemarketing.net.