

The Deloitte Film Festival
Deloitte Film Festival Team
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New York City, U.S.

NEED/OPPORTUNITY / Deloitte, a leading professional services firm, is locked in a fierce war for talent. To meet business goals, Deloitte hires 10,000 people a year in the U.S. Most of those hires are drawn from Generation Y (currently making up 22 percent of all U.S. workers). The pronounced shortage of highly qualified Gen Y talent has created a relentless battle among competitors for the best and brightest. In addition to recruiting new talent, Deloitte also needs to “re-recruit” its existing workforce to help keep retention levels high. Again, most of this talent is Gen Y. Given this war for talent, Deloitte needed to distinguish itself from the competition and create “next generation” recruiting and retention approaches.

Deloitte’s quest to be the standard of excellence demands a constant drive for innovation. The Film Festival supported the U.S. Strategy 2010 vision to be “the first choice of the world’s most coveted talent...drawn by our eminence, culture and diversity.” Outcomes supported two strategic objectives: to increase the tenure of client service professionals and to increase people’s satisfaction.

The society for Human Resource Management’s 2007 Job Satisfaction Survey reported that overall corporate culture is “very important” to more than a third (36 percent) of respondents.

In this context, Deloitte decided to try a new, more creative approach to connect with its target audiences. The Film Festival was born out of the confluence of three emerging trends:

- ▶ The pervasive popularity of social media
- ▶ The growing trend toward user-generated content
- ▶ The mass democratization of filmmaking through new technology

By asking the question, “What’s your Deloitte?” of its personnel, Deloitte put the brand in the hands of its people and allowed them to express it in the most powerful, authentic way possible—through film. Who better to tell the Deloitte story?

INTENDED AUDIENCE(S) / Deloitte is the largest of the “Big Four” professional services firms, offering accounting, tax, consulting and financial advisory services. In the U.S., personnel span four generations, work in five different businesses and are located in 75 offices across the U.S. and India (of the 39,783 employees, 5,410 are based in Hyderabad and Mumbai). To say Deloitte is a dispersed workforce is an

NOTES:

¹ As used in this document, “Deloitte” means Deloitte LLP. Please see www.deloitte.com/us/about for a detailed description of the legal structure of Deloitte LLP and its subsidiaries.

understatement. The majority of its client service professionals often work remotely from client sites. Summer interns were eligible to participate in the Film Festival (a team of interns took third place), as were senior leaders—partners/principals (owners of the firm)—though they were ineligible to win prizes. Even the chairman of the board made cameo appearances in several films.

To state the obvious, Deloitte’s people are not professional filmmakers, actors or directors. Because it is a traditionally conservative business, Deloitte recognized the imperative to take a nontraditional and unexpected approach to fully connect to its diverse audience. The Film Festival needed to look, feel, sound and be experienced as something surprising but supportive.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES / The basic goals of the Film Festival were:

- ▶ Encourage the people of Deloitte to make three-minute amateur films answering the question, What’s your Deloitte? to be used to recruit and retain talent.
- ▶ Create a more innovative and inclusive culture by sparking new conversations/interactions across levels, offices and businesses, deepening Deloitte’s sense of community.

The objectives were:

- ▶ Deliver breakthrough communications that would boost morale and drive participation (whether filmmaking or viewing/voting) among all Deloitte professionals.
- ▶ Reach and engage a dispersed workforce, inspiring them to do something outside of their comfort zone during their discretionary time.
- ▶ Empower employees at all levels to drive viral communications.

SOLUTION OVERVIEW / The core Film Festival team partnered with the creative agency NYCCollective to develop the branding (which was “fresh” yet remained within corporate guidelines by drawing from tertiary color palates and fonts) for the Film Festival icon, intranet site, online newsletter and posters, as well as the 11 promotional videos starring Film Festival Guy and Awesome Tech Guy, who were ambassadors for the initiative.

The strategic approach was to drive participation from the bottom up and allow buzz to grow organically, with opt-in participation. Through a prelaunch viral campaign, a grouping of 300 Film Festival champions—the Directors’ Circle—that was diverse by office, level and role, eagerly committed to making a film and promoting the Film Festival via their networks. This created tremendous momentum and guaranteed a successful launch. Postlaunch, many business and office leaders developed their own promotional communications, encouraging their personnel to participate. As a result, Deloitte successfully built a synergistic partnership with on-the-ground champions and senior leadership, enabling the core team to continually refine messaging and tactics based on real activity in the field.

Campaign execution occurred in three phases:

1. Introduction/team registration
2. Film submissions
3. Rating/voting/winners announcement

The team relied almost exclusively on pull communication tactics, running a truly online campaign within DeloitteNet (Deloitte's intranet) and the Film Festival site housed within it.

The Film Festival Guy videos quickly drew people in, communicating the vision and milestones of the initiative. Their goofiness captured the fun-spirited energy and entertained a broad audience. Film Festival Guy and Awesome Tech Guy developed a loyal following; they received several invitations to off-site events.

Once registration closed (and the starter kits—some including video cameras—were disbursed to 630 teams), all communications shifted to filmmakers, with a focus on motivational and technical support through an e-newsletter, online guides, a help line, live trainings and access to a royalty-free music house. On-call film experts and local volunteers guided filmmakers through camera logistics, storyboarding, sound and the biggest challenge—editing. The total period in which to make films was six weeks. Upon completion, filmmakers returned the 350 loaner cameras to Deloitte, which were then donated to film- and youth-oriented charities like Film Aid International.

For the rating period, the 372 films submitted were posted to an internal YouTube-like site built specifically for the Film Festival. There was hardly a need to drive traffic during the 11-day rating period; the viral machine was ready to go. Two thousand filmmakers were primed to promote their work; dozens of offices held screenings of their local films. A panel of judges then narrowed the field to 14 finalists. Those films went back up online for 11 days, and employees selected the four winners, the announcement of which attracted 10,109 hits. Winners chose between an experiential trip (e.g., the Sundance Film Festival) or a cash prize.

IMPLEMENTATION AND CHALLENGES / The Film Festival was led by a core team that developed the strategy that addressed the business case, the creative collateral, integrated communications, technology, and legal/risk issues, and then led the execution. This core team included seven Deloitte professionals, three of whom were dedicated to the initiative on a full-time basis. These professionals originated from Deloitte's internal communications group and Deloitte Consulting.

The conceptualization and positioning of the Film Festival was fleshed out over a four-month period of weekly meetings. Deloitte was convinced that filmmaking activity—employees being creative together, taking risks outside their official roles together—would help build teams, break down silos, and further develop a culture of innovation and inclusion. But how could the team ensure success and buy-in?

Early and continuous internal briefings to stakeholders were key. The team took stakeholders' feedback into account at every step in the process. With six weeks to deliver the launch communications (five promotional videos, the Film Festival logo, web site design and content, contest rules, registration, and a nego-

tiated contract with a royalty-free music house), the team had to work seamlessly together and partner closely with NYCollective. The intensity of deliverables remained high throughout the 12-week event.

As a first-time project, there were no benchmarks to which the core team could refer. To achieve maximum success, they needed to anticipate all possible options. Online metrics and anecdotal feedback from every quarter aided in the assessment and re-tooling of tactics and plans throughout the project. Situations demanded that the team work in new ways and be highly creative under tight deadlines. And the connection to filmmakers and personnel needed to remain strong so that messaging would keep them engaged and motivated.

Although the budget for the project cannot be disclosed, the costs—1 percent of the national recruiting budget—were well managed and the amount spent did not exceed expectations. Support for the project was so high that internal resources *volunteered*. Some appeared in the promotional films. Others helped complete various operational tasks, set up local office film trainings or staffed screenings of local films.

Another major challenge was the tight time line. The launch of the Film Festival had to grab people's attention immediately; there were only three weeks for the campaign to build momentum and attract filmmakers to register, then another three weeks to submit films. The core team proactively managed the expected gap between registration level (intent) and submission (execution) by establishing deadlines to function as assessment tools. The decision to invest in filmmaker support tools was critical. Insight there came from the results of prelaunch focus groups, which also played a critical role in establishing the project voice/tone and structuring the project for maximal two-way communications.

If submission numbers were high (372 films certainly exceeded expectations), then it would be highly likely that the project's momentum would drive the rating and voting periods. It did. Deloitte's people made the Film Festival their own.

MEASUREMENT/EVALUATION / There were 300 prelaunch champions—Directors' Circle members.

- ▶ Six hundred thirty teams registered to make films; 350 cameras were distributed.
- ▶ Three hundred seventy-two films were submitted by 2,001 filmmakers, including 111 summer interns:
 - Equivalent to 5 percent of personnel participating in filmmaking activity
 - Equivalent to 75 percent of personnel participating via filmmaking, viewing, rating and/or voting
- ▶ There were 407,892 hits to the film viewing gallery over 22 days, indicating high employee engagement; the winners announcement garnered the 17th all-time highest number of hits to DeloitteNet.
- ▶ Approximately 66 percent of all 75 offices held screenings of locally-made films.

□ Employee/Member Communication

- ▶ The Film Festival was a significant factor in *BusinessWeek's* selecting Deloitte as the “#1 Best Place to Launch a Career”; there were 31 additional press hits, including *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, MSNBC, *BusinessWeek*, *USA Today* and *Newsday*.
- ▶ Morale soared; 75 percent of post-Film Festival survey respondents said they shared the project with friends, family and colleagues outside of Deloitte.
- ▶ Survey results also revealed that 83.5 percent of filmmakers grew their relationships and networks across Deloitte's businesses, 76.4 percent developed deeper connections to their local office and 62.9 percent improved their teaming skills.
- ▶ Qualitative data showed enhanced interactions between interns/partners and Indian/U.S. colleagues as well as more rapid acculturation for new hires.
- ▶ Such high-quality films were received that the number of finalists was expanded from 10 to 14, and a fourth prize was added.
- ▶ The films are currently used internally at all-hands meetings, senior leadership meetings and new hire orientations; they are used externally at recruiting events, CEO speeches, professional industry events and online recruitment sites. The finalists were posted to YouTube.
- ▶ Feedback indicates films are received with laughs and even standing ovations. Deloitte's open, inclusive and creative culture comes to life on-screen.