

From inside to out: Reinventing a brand globally and locally

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is Intel's senior director of brand strategy, campaigns and programmes. Since 2014, she and her team have led the effort to revitalise the Intel brand globally and to reverse years of declines in brand perceptions and relevance. She believes in the power of storytelling to create lasting connections with audiences. As Intel evolves from an ingredient to an experiential brand, Louise is focused on the creation of programmes that authentically make Intel a part of the cultural fabric and current conversation, with brand experiences in music, sports and entertainment, and integrations into branded entertainment and content.

Abstract

Two years ago, Intel was at a crossroads. As the leader in personal computer chip technology, Intel had built its business and brand through the persistent focus on 'Intel Inside'. With the personal computer market softening, perceptions of the company as relevant and innovative were weakening. Third-party brand studies had dramatically reduced Intel's brand ranking. Proprietary brand research underscored the declining state of the brand. As technology rapidly evolved, with more and more brands entering the market, Intel's role, brand visibility and relevance had become overshadowed. With future growth expected to come from categories fuelled by the data centre, the Internet of Things, wearable technology, drones, virtual reality and other innovations, Intel needed to redefine the brand, connect people to the experiences that Intel makes possible, expand the brand domain, and increase relevance in order to be a vital, vibrant and leading brand for the future. A bold goal was established: to reinvent, revitalise and transform the Intel brand, connecting Intel's equity as the power inside to the amazing experiences enabled outside. This paper tells the story of that brand transformation and how localisation of a global strategy drove meaningful impact on Intel's relevance and brand value around the world.

Keywords

Intel, technology, transformation, brand value, experience, localisation, brand strategy

BRAND AT A CROSSROADS

Two years ago, Intel was at a crossroads. As the leader in personal computer chip technology, Intel had built its business and brand through the consistent and persistent focus on 'Intel Inside'. The brand was almost exclusively tied to the PC category, and with the personal computer market softening, perceptions of the company as relevant and innovative were weakening. Third-party brand studies — including Interbrand's Best

Global Brands and Millward Brown's BrandZ™ Most Valuable Brands — had dramatically reduced Intel's brand ranking. Interbrand dropped Intel from the 4th best brand in 2000 to number 12 by 2014. BrandZ, between 2012 and 2014, dropped Intel from 49 to 86. Our proprietary brand research underscored the declining state of the brand, documenting a steady downtick on core metrics correlated to brand consideration, purchase intent and preference.

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As technology rapidly evolved, with more and more brands and products entering the market and spending aggressively to grab mind and market share, Intel's role, brand visibility and relevance had become overshadowed. With future growth expected to come from categories fuelled by the data centre, the Internet of Things, wearable technology, drones, virtual reality and other innovations, Intel needed to redefine the brand, connect people to the experiences that Intel makes possible, expand the brand domain, and increase relevance in order to be a vital, vibrant and leading brand for the future.

The challenge was particularly acute with the Millennial population, whose increasing buying power and influence made them critical to Intel's future brand and business growth. For these digital natives, technology is ubiquitous and integral to every aspect of their lives. While technology permeates their lives, Millennials did not know the depth and breadth of how Intel technology is a part of so many facets of society, business and life. In fact, they did not know much, if anything, about the brand.

For them, Intel was, quite simply, irrelevant; the company had gone from inside to invisible. We had a clear, if dramatic, brand mandate: evolve or die.

As a brand strategist, the opportunity to fundamentally reinvent a brand can be both exciting and daunting, especially when the brand in question is one of the Fortune 100 with a nearly 50-year history and over US\$50bn in annual revenue. But there was no question that we had to change our approach in order to influence the trajectory of the brand and support our future business growth ambition and potential.

A bold and audacious goal was established: to reinvent, revitalise and transform the Intel brand by connecting Intel's

equity as the power *inside* to the amazing experiences Intel enables *outside*. So we set about turning one of technology's greatest ingredient brands into one of the world's more innovative experiential brands, inspired and guided by our new brand promise: Intel Makes Amazing Experiences Possible.

We kicked off our repositioning effort with a new integrated campaign that portrayed all of the surprising places and spaces where Intel technology exists that no one gave us credit for, showcasing Intel's role in everything from healthcare to aerospace, fashion to music, animation to autonomous driving, and so much more. Against a musical backdrop that mashed up one of the world's most famous and iconic masterpieces, Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, with Intel's own iconic 5-note audio signature 'bong', the campaign challenged people to rethink Intel and our role in the world.

But we knew that we could not just proclaim that Intel makes amazing experiences possible. We had to actually deliver tangible, visceral, emotional, powerful, real-world experiences where the role of Intel technology was not only integral, but inescapable. Without Intel, those experiences simply would not be possible.

Experiences are today's cultural currency. What you have seen, where you have been and what you have accomplished are the stories that make up your unique life. And while we often use technology to preserve those moments, when done right, technology can actually contribute to the *creation* of experiences that are deeper, richer, more dimensional, more sharable and more memorable.

For Millennials, experiences define their identities and communities. Research in eight countries helped us better understand this young generation and their life passion points so that we could create

culturally relevant, compelling and unique experiences based on their interests, such as sports, music and gaming. With these insights, we built a vision and plan to deliver one-of-a-kind experiences infused with Intel technology, where the technology was always an organic part of the experience; never technology for technology's sake alone.

And while our repositioning had a global mandate, we wanted to create experiences relevant to local consumers, tailored to specific market insights, cultural priorities and interests. Intel needed cultural cache, and that would manifest in different ways depending on the market. At the same time, we had to find ways to scale the experiences so that we could reach a far broader population beyond those who would be able to connect with the experiences first-hand: each experience needed built-in social and PR hooks that could amplify and expand reach and impact.

A SPOTLIGHT PERFORMANCE ON MUSIC'S BIGGEST NIGHT

The language of music unites people around the world. And there was no better moment to launch the brand repositioning effort than with The Grammys, one of the most visible, largest world music stages. We set out to create a performance inspired by and infused with Intel technology, created in partnership with arguably one of the most innovative and creative musical artists today, Lady Gaga.

In collaboration with Intel technologists, Intel's in-house creative agency, and Lady Gaga's creative team, a spotlight performance was conceived and designed to pay tribute to the recent passing of David Bowie. Specialised hardware powered by Intel processors provided the requisite high performance to choreograph the

performance lighting, audio and projection systems in perfect harmony with Lady Gaga. Using Intel® RealSense™, an animated face was developed for her through digital facial projection mapping that enabled Lady Gaga to don a number of Bowie's iconic looks, all in a single performance in real time, to mind-blowing effect.

With a special technology-enabled ring, Lady Gaga controlled how she appeared on a large LED wall behind her, generating real-time effects as she rotated and animated her wrists and arms. An innovative combination of her Intel ring and holographic display materials were used to generate a three-dimensional hologram of Bowie. In another innovative application, her rose gold piano took on a life of its own as three Intel® Atom™ processor-powered robot legs danced as one to add unexpected motion effects to a traditionally staid and steady instrument.

No brand had ever been allowed into The Grammys broadcast before, but The Grammys saw the amazing potential inherent in celebrating technology and spotlighting what was driving so much of the innovation in musical artistry, creation and performance. With the global audience and press attention, Intel was at the forefront of shifting perceptions of the brand in bold, dramatic fashion.

The tribute was the most talked about moment of the night. In addition to the 25 million people watching the broadcast, an accompanying campaign gave behind-the-scenes access, deconstructing the performance and collaboration, showing how technology and creativity came together. The work generated more than 120 news stories and 10 billion impressions worldwide, with brand lift of 122 per cent when measuring benchmarks for how Millennials saw Intel as an innovative brand.

As the first major brand experience, The Grammys put Intel squarely into the middle of pop culture and conversation. From there, we looked to develop local experiences to drive similar engagement, relevance and cultural cache.

HISTORY COMES ALIVE

One of our most creative and successful local programmes debuted in China and was rooted in a powerful insight about today's modern, young and tech-savvy consumers in that country.

Xi'an is a city in northwest China, rich in history, serving as the imperial capital for ten ancient dynasties. Today, Xi'an is a bustling modern city, home to more than eight million people. The old city, surrounded by the original 40-ft-high and 40-ft-wide city wall, is now dwarfed by the towering apartment and office buildings that have sprung up around the original city and spread widely beyond. And yet the original historic part of the city is still visible, with its impressive gates and massive walls that for centuries protected its residents from marauding armies. Xi'an is, in many ways, emblematic of modern China, a country propelling itself headlong into the future, sometimes at the expense of preserving and celebrating its rich and storied past.

This dynamic led Intel's marketing team in China to uncover a powerful insight: despite being surrounded by centuries of history, many Chinese Millennials were disconnected from the country's past. It seemed remote, irrelevant and uninteresting, and they simply had no personal connection to it.

That is where Intel innovation came into play.

Working with our agency and creative partners, we developed a programme called 'History Comes Alive'. Through

a series of animated digital films, we depicted important moments and myths from China's past. Epic battles and love stories told from generation to generation came to life. But in each one, many characters were faceless. Why? Because we wanted to transport people into the past, to blur the lines between centuries-old stories and the modern day, and connect Chinese Millennials with China's history by quite literally projecting them into it. Intel RealSense 3D facial-scanning technology digitally captured people's faces and pushed that data up to the cloud where it was integrated in near-real-time to the films. The finished films were then projected onto the ancient Xi'an city walls in monumental, dramatic and larger-than-life fashion, stunning the audience as they saw themselves playing history's greatest heroes, princesses, warriors and emperors.

Because they were playing active and vital roles in the films, they were not simply passive viewers in the experience. People raptly watched the drama unfold, seeing themselves in starring roles. Through the cloud, we pushed customised video directly to their WeChat accounts for higher-quality, more personally relevant social sharing.

Modern Chinese Millennials became the historic characters, immersed in their worlds, sharing in their emotions, experiencing the adventure, tragedy, romance, thrill and success of people who were otherwise remote or irrelevant. History became personal; history came alive.

After the initial launch in Xi'an, the experience was taken to eight other cities, enabling thousands of Chinese Millennials to participate in the films. The effort garnered over 700 million impressions, with more than 4.6 million video views. In addition, core brand metrics rose significantly, with a 20 per cent increase in Intel

being perceived as innovative and 23 per cent increase in being perceived as delivering breakthrough technology.

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

Intel went from Asia to EMEA with a spectacular collaboration with the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford-Upon-Avon in England, resulting in one of the most ground-breaking experiences of the year.

Inspired by Intel CEO Brian Krzanich's 2014 keynote at the Consumer Electronics Show where a huge digital whale swam out of the screen to soar over the audience, the Royal Shakespeare Company contacted Intel to collaborate on a bold reimagining of the live theatre experience. Could Intel technology enable other-worldly and magical characters to perform onstage, in real-time, with human actors in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, the most technologically advanced and challenging play of its time? Over the course of two years of testing, learning, trialling, failing and reinventing, Intel, the RSC and Imaginarium Studios created a custom technical solution designed to fully realise the power of Shakespeare's storytelling and make the live theatre experience more immersive and amazing.

For the first time, performance-capture technology was used to render an animated character — Ariel the shape-shifting spirit — in real time, live on stage. While digital avatars are a staple of video games and movies, the complex and time-consuming post-production process could not be used for live theatre. Instead, Intel created giant workstations, powered by Intel® Core™ i7 K-SKUs and Intel® Xeon™ processors, with redundant back-up systems, to allow the digital characters to render and act alongside human actors with no lag time and no room for error.

There was no off-the-shelf technology solution for what the RSC envisioned. Inspired by a shared vision for what could be possible and a passion for the power of storytelling, the Intel research teams undertook the challenge, working to prototype multiple systems configurations to supply the right technical capabilities with the flexibility required for a production that evolved every night and the reliability required for a show that ran for three hours, eight times a week.

This collaboration squarely fit with Intel's objective to reinvent the Intel brand and introduce a new, younger generation to Intel through amazing experiences. The team developed rich video featuring interviews with the cast, technical staff and artistic directors to unfold the story of the collaboration and to provide a behind-the-scenes view of how Intel technology made the production possible. A robust social and digital media campaign gave audiences worldwide a peek into the production, scaling the experience far beyond the stage in England. Press and influencers from around the world, representing mainstream, arts and technology media, were invited to attend the opening performance and given exclusive access, interviews and tours. The programme secured more than 500 pieces of coverage internationally, across mainstream, tech and lifestyle press, resulting in 84 million impressions. Video and social content garnered 6.3 million engagements and 9.8 million video views.

The combined efforts of the RSC and Intel resulted in a fully sold-out eight-week run for the show, with early success triggering a commitment to live-stream the performance to cinemas throughout the EU and the US, followed by an eight-week live run in London at the famed Barbican Theatre.

The partnership between the RSC and Intel broke new ground for creative communities. The shared vision of the RSC and Intel for the possibilities inherent in a breakthrough experience has demonstrated new ways that technology can enhance creativity and storytelling and elevate the enjoyment of classic artistic performances.

DELIVERING IMPACT AND VALUE

To change long-held brand perceptions required imagination, creativity, tenacity, confidence and innovative partnerships. We found all of these to be of far greater importance than budget alone. Because when you can organically, contextually and authentically integrate your brand in unique ways that are meaningful to your audience, you will make an indelible impact with experiences that leave a lasting impression.

Reinventing your brand does not mean having to sever from the past. When trying to reach new audiences and make your brand relevant to them, it is critical to meet them where they already are and demonstrate in meaningful, tangible, powerful

and unique ways how your brand can improve their lives. By embracing Intel's equity as the technology 'inside', we were able to redefine our brand promise from 'inside' to 'outside', and make one of the foremost technology brands once again visible, viable and vibrant.

The experiences staged around the world made a significant impact on Intel brand value and perceptions. Between 2014 and 2016, Intel brand value increased by \$3bn on Interbrand's Best Global Brands list. In the same time period on Millward Brown's BrandZ, Intel moved up by more than 30 positions and increased brand value by \$7bn. Our proprietary brand tracker chronicled significant improvement on all of our core metrics across all audiences, including the hard-to-reach and hard-to-influence millennial cohort.

In today's culture, technology plays a vital and integral role in making experiences better than ever. Technology can unleash creativity and inspire experiences that leave a lasting memory and impact. Those are the kinds of experiences we are investing in, and the kinds of experiences that we want the Intel brand to stand for.