

AXN & The Amazing Race Asia 3

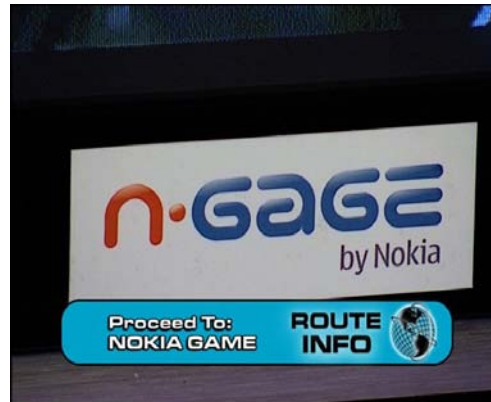
CASE STUDY: *Branded Entertainment – The Next BIG Wave*

In a media environment where audiences are exposed to regular advertising which continues to play important roles in advertisers' A&P campaigns, it takes a lot more to draw and retain consumers' attention.

Pay-TV channel AXN, the destination for action and adventure and quality English entertainment, stands out in this respect as it offers advertisers a unique selling platform – branded entertainment.

Through brand and product integration into original content, AXN offers advertisers opportunities to be an integral part of enjoyable and entertaining TV shows. These provide positive environments to effectively showcase products without being overtly obtrusive, unparalleled access to target consumers at their full attention, as well as innovative and "blue ocean" means of conveying brand and product messages.

Such a campaign was most recently successfully executed once more for forward-looking mobile giant Nokia in a marketing campaign to promote their new range of smartphones in AXN's International Emmy-nominated *The Amazing Race Asia 3*. Indeed, the success of the innovative campaign was affirmed as the 'Best Pan Asia Campaign' at the 2009 Singapore Media Awards (SMA), organized by the Association of Accredited Advertising Agents Singapore (4As) in November 2009.



One of the pioneers in developing Asian productions for the world, AXN continued in 2008 to produce top quality branded entertainment with *The Amazing Race Asia 3*, the third edition of the Asian adaptation of the seven-time Primetime Emmy-winning *The Amazing Race* reality contest. With a strong following among regional audiences especially PMEB viewers, *The Amazing Race Asia 3* was the platform of choice for Nokia which targets a similar consumer profile.

In making branded entertainment effective as a marketing tool, a show must allow brand and product placement and integration that do not adversely affect the entertainment value of the show. Thus, AXN's challenge was to seamlessly weave in the Nokia brand and products into *The Amazing Race Asia 3* while offering an engaging entertainment experience to regional viewers.

Ideas & Execution

Produced by, and broadcast exclusively from Sep – Nov 2008 across Asia on AXN, *The Amazing Race Asia 3* effectively spotlighted Nokia handsets as crucial elements of a pulsating competition. AXN Asia worked with Nokia and its media agency, MediaCom Singapore, to create and weave in a highly integrated campaign to showcase capabilities of the Nokia smartphones and applications.

In the Saigon leg, racers had to complete level one of futuristic 3D racing game 'System Rush' on the Nokia N.Gage handset for the clue to the next checkpoint. Spotlighting the N.Gage handset, viewers not only got to see the breath-taking gameplay on the handsets, they were able to also feel the excitement and adrenalin that the racers were experiencing in this race against time.



In Pune, India, contestants used the Nokia 6210 Navigator handset to guide their teams' auto-rickshaw drivers to the clue for the next checkpoint. Sharing racers' close-up views of the mobile maps and hearing directions from the Nokia 6210 Navigator, AXN viewers got a demonstration of the various capabilities of Nokia handsets while being part of the contestants' thrilling ride.

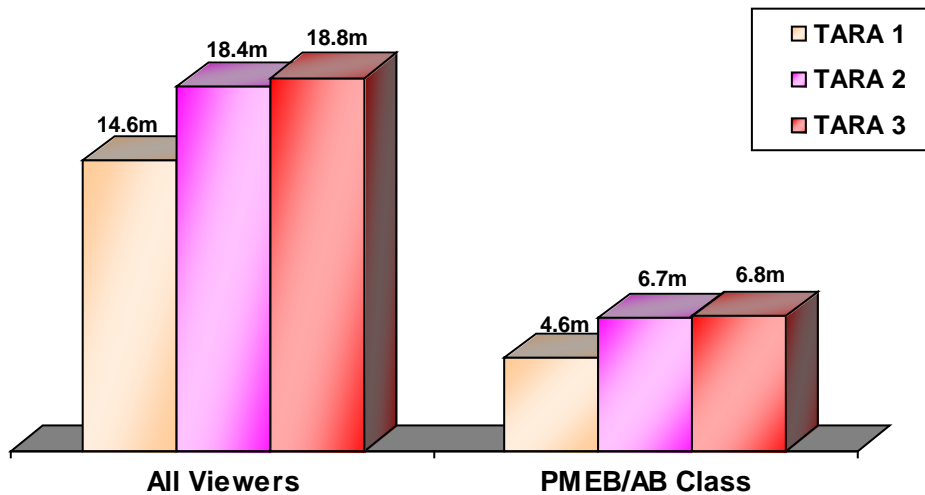


Finally in the Taipei leg of *The Amazing Race Asia 3*, the Nokia N96 smartphone was presented to the team that won that leg. Packed with multimedia capabilities, the Nokia N96 handset was a welcomed prize for the race leaders, for their well-deserved break at the pit stop.

Results

For its innovation and finesse of execution, the branded entertainment campaign on AXN's *The Amazing Race Asia 3* was a resounding success. Nokia's product integration in the show did not compromise the show's entertainment value and quality due to the organic and natural integration of Nokia's products and as such, viewers were thoroughly entertained.

Viewership consistently grew from season to season, and Season 3 garnered a total of 18.8million viewers. It was the highest rating programme compared to major international channels during its time slot, and statistics even showed that viewers stayed tuned to the channel during commercial breaks.



Source: TNS Spore, AGB NMR Msia/Phi/TW, CSM Hong Kong, TAM India

In summing up, SMA 2009 jury member and Managing Director of Nestle Singapore Suresh Narayanan said, "Nokia got onto probably one of the best media platforms that they could. *The Amazing Race Asia* is by far one of the most engaging platforms in terms of the excitement and connection to the target consumers. The sheer force that the program itself brought to (Nokia's) Nseries, in terms of the usage of the equipment in the actual situations, connected the instrument, the N-series and its functionalities in a very meaningful manner."