

CNN, VOLVO RACE THE SUN IN HISTORIC CULTURAL MOMENT

LIVESTREAMED COVERAGE PROVED THE MOST-WATCHED LIVE VR EXPERIENCE EVER AND A MILESTONE IN BRANDED CONTENT.

By Turner Ignite. Published on Jun 11, 2018.



Credit: CNN

To showcase technical innovation in an unforgettable way, Volvo partnered with CNN to give audiences around the world a front-row seat to one of 2017's anticipated cultural moments: the August 21 total solar eclipse across the U.S.

CNN and Volvo's "Racing the Sun" livestreamed, virtual reality coverage of the eclipse proved the most-watched live VR experience in history and a milestone in branded content.

Volvo sent four of its redesigned XC60 SUVs to chase the eclipse, outfitted with 4K 360° cameras and positioned in four locations within the path of totality. Interior and exterior cameras placed audiences in a virtual passenger seat as the vehicles raced the solar eclipse across the country, providing immersive access to this cosmic event across CNN Digital's platforms around the world.

Produced by CNNVR and CNN's brand studio Courageous, the seven livestreams featured four branded content segments, with experts including an astronaut and a world explorer providing their unique perspectives on the event in real time. The execution marked the first time that Courageous produced a live ad for an advertiser on CNN, all while seamlessly delivering an authentic experience.

The 4K VR livestream was linked via satellite not only to CNN Digital's platforms, but also Facebook and Oculus, allowing audiences to watch the eclipse as the moments of total darkness crossed the U.S., with less than a one-second delay. The event was promoted in advance on a custom landing page, complete with countdown clock and lead-up branded videos.

For Volvo, the timing was perfect. The relaunched XC60 not only elevated the brand's luxury reputation, but also included technology not available in previous models. The "Racing the Sun" experience, developed in partnership with creative agency Grey New York, media agency Mindshare, Volvo and CNN, specifically aligned the XC60 with technological innovation and helped shatter traditional perceptions of the Volvo brand. A powerful engine, precision control, built-in 360° camera and panoramic moonroof made the XC60 the perfect vehicle to chase the eclipse. Canvs focused on the primary Facebook page of each publisher.

With 24 million video starts on the day of the eclipse, the CNN livestream proved the most-watched live VR experience in history, offering a glimpse of new possibilities in shared entertainment experiences. It was also CNN Digital's second-highest day of 2017 in terms of both unique visitors and video starts, ranking behind only the Presidential Inauguration.

AdAge

ABOUT ^{turner}ignite

Turner Ignite is focused on reimagining advertising. Powered by unrivaled branded content services, data-rich ad targeting capabilities, first-of-its kind social optimization tools and global distribution, Turner Ignite empowers brands to build more meaningful connections with consumers and drive return on investment at scale. The business unit is backed by Turner's wide-scale audience of diverse fans within its portfolio properties, including leading media brands Adult Swim, Boomerang, Cartoon Network, CNN, Great Big Story, HLN, SuperDeluxe, TBS, TNT, truTV, Bleacher Report and Turner Sports' high-profile coverage of the NBA, Major League Baseball, NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Championship, ELeague, UEFA and professional golf. In addition, the company has digital sales partnerships with the NBA, NCAA and PGA.