

16.13: Case Study - Harley-Davidson

One-line summary

Harley-Davidson Australia used Instagram to successfully reach a younger audience in the 18–35 year old millennial market.

The challenge

Harley-Davidson is an iconic American motorcycle brand. The brand has come to symbolise freedom and individuality, but is associated with an older market. The brand wanted to raise brand awareness and engage a younger audience.

The solution

Harley Davidson decided to use Instagram ads, for the first time, to reach 18–to 35-year old men in Australia and New Zealand.

Harley-Davidson used a series of illustrations to fit in with the visual nature of Instagram. They wanted to appeal to young, adventurous people who appreciate the world through a more visual lens. The brand identified three themes they felt resonated with their intended audience, and tapped in to their own artistic heritage of seeing motorcycles as pieces of art. The brand commissioned local Australian artists to interpret these themes.

The illustrations were displayed as carousel ads for each theme. When swiped the images connected to form a storyline. The visual style was designed to mimic tattoo-like images and motifs that are popular in biking culture.



Figure 16.13.1: An example of the 2016 Harley-Davidson posts on Instagram *Adapted From Digital Training Academy, 2016*

The results

Over a run of just over two weeks, the ads reached almost 1.4 million men, aged between 18 and 35.

The ad drove over 8 000 clicks through to the brand's website.

Harley-Davidson achieved their objective of resonating with a younger audience, and ultimately expanding their demographic (Digital Training Academy, 2016).

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