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ADVERTISING X-RAY OF THE BEST ENTRIES

Best of the Best #3: “Showroom in a bus”, a globally awarded Effie case.

The work carried out by Ogilvy El Salvador for its client Kia, was one of the twelve awarded last December with an Effie Global Best of the Best. It won the Small Budgets category. This “advertising x-ray” offers a deep look at its way of inscription, narrated with the same first person with whom those responsible wrote it. At the end of the text, the video of the case.



Caption:

“During the campaign, Kia Picanto became the top-selling car in its category, accounting for 25% of all car sales in the industry” say the officials.

Title: *The first car showroom inside a bus*

Advertiser: Kia Motors

Brand: Picanto

Agency: Ogilvy El Salvador

Industry sector: Automotive

Type of product: Vehicle

Dates presented in this case: February 15, 2022 - October 15, 2022

Executive summary: Kia experienced a drastic decline in sales, while its main competitor grew in market share. It went from being the 3rd participant in the industry to the 6th. In December 2021 and January 2022, the brand sold less than 50% of its monthly average sales. December 2021 ended with sales lower than pre-pandemic levels, while its direct competitor increased sales by 20%.

Case summary: We created the experience of “the first car showroom inside a public bus”.

Instead of targeting a broad audience, we went for a base of customers exhausted from the bad experience of using the public transportation system. We cut the back wall of a traditional bus, removed some passenger seats, adapted the lighting system, ramped the Picanto inside and exhibited it around the city for 30 days. One salesperson explained to the bus passengers the car features and the cheap payment plans.

Challenge, context and objectives: 1- Increase Kia's market share and recover its position among the top two brands in the retail vehicle industry. 2- Sell at least 50% of inventory in the three months leading up to the campaign. 3- Increase the Kia Picanto's leads by 50%. Salvadoran culture understanding played a key role in this experience. Buses are used by 90% of the population, and with such a high volume of people traffic on the units, traders of all kinds of goods take advantage of the opportunity to sell their merchandise. Some organizations estimate sales of around 1 million USD on cheap daily products nationwide commercialized inside the public transportation units. Inspired by the custom of selling everything on buses, we decided to avoid mass media advertising and go straight to sell the Kia Picanto with an experience inside the buses. Studying the target preferences, purchase behaviour, and demographics, we discovered three key elements: 1) the majority of the public transportation users do not consider themselves potential car owners because their income is not enough to pay the monthly fee, and 2) some bus users also spend on taxis and Ubers, with their monthly expenses approximating \$140 dollars, a number close to the monthly fee to buy a Kia Picanto. 3) Those who are financially capable of paying the Picanto's monthly fee work in government offices, call centers, or are university students. Hence, most of them use the 101B bus route line every day to commute.

Insights and strategic idea: People who would like to acquire their first vehicle or an "entry-level" vehicle, where the main attributes sought in the product are practicality, low price, low maintenance cost, and ease of driving. People living in the city in the low and middle income category. This audience is relevant for Kia because they are the consumer base that is expected to migrate in the coming years to vehicles of higher range, prices and features, selling them the first agency vehicle is important to start the loyalty process with the brand. The commercial approach of The First Car Showroom Inside a Bus aimed to challenge the belief of public transportation users that they could not afford to own a car. The insight came after deciding not to launch a mass media campaign but instead to create an experiential campaign. We needed a space that would allow us to interact with a significant number of potential customers and increase the number of generated leads. The initial observation that led us to choose public transportation was the cultural significance of buses in the sale of affordable products. In El Salvador, everything is sold on buses, so why not sell a car during the journey? That's how we began gathering information related to customers and buses. During conversations with public transportation users, our internal team, and the client, we uncovered the main communication barrier: "You cannot sell a car as a cheap product on a bus. We (bus users) cannot afford to own a car. I don't know how much a brand-new car like that is, but it's not for people like us." We realized the mindset we needed to challenge in order to make an impact. This case serves as an example of reframing customer beliefs. Rather than relying on aspirational communication tactics, we reframed customers' realities and showed them that owning a car was within their reach. By connecting their reality with their aspirations, we helped to shift their perception of car ownership.

Bringing the idea to life: To rescue the fall in sales of Kia in El Salvador, we chose to promote the new model of Kia Picanto, the most compact and affordable car on the market. To do so, we created the experience of “the first car showroom inside a public bus”. Instead of targeting a broad audience, we went for a base of customers exhausted from the bad experience of using the public transportation system. We cut the back wall of a traditional bus, removed some passenger seats, adapted the lighting system, ramped the Picanto inside, and exhibited it around the city. One salesperson explained to the bus passengers the car features and the cheap payment plans. The First Car Showroom Inside a Bus was created to address a weakness in the category: the lack of connection with Salvadoran lifestyle. Often, vehicle brands replicate global campaigns to create an aspirational effect on their products, which can lead to false perceptions of price and rejection from potential customers who believe owning a car is beyond their financial capacity. The main goal of The First Car Showroom Inside a Bus was to reduce the perception gap between customers’ willingness and capacity to pay, and Kia Picanto’s payment plans. Essentially, our aim was to take the brand experience beyond traditional media and integrate it into customers’ daily lives. We launched the experience in the very place where they experience the discomfort and frustrations of public transportation bad service and the frustration of limited travel options. Through this, we demonstrated that owning a car could be a part of their lifestyle, rather than an unattainable luxury. The first car showroom inside a bus toured the streets of El Salvador, showcasing the vehicle directly to bus users, providing price quotes, and demonstrating that the \$140 they spend monthly on transportation is close to the Kia Picanto’s minimum monthly payment of USD\$144. Additionally, promotional messages were run on social media (Facebook) to encourage price quotes. During the bus activation, a sales advisor was present to show consumers that the Picanto “fits everywhere and in your budget,” demonstrating that the purchase is within their reach. Using a tablet, the numbers were calculated to compare the USD\$140 monthly transportation expense with the USD\$144 minimum payment for the Kia Picanto. Originally, there was no plan to communicate the activation on social media, but upon seeing the organic conversation generated, the decision was made to launch brand messages inviting people to request a vehicle quote. In a country with an urban population of 1.8 million, one car showroom was enough to impact 40,000 people (about twice the seating capacity of Madison Square Garden) daily, the car showroom was implemented in one of the most transited and extended routes in the country, the 101, 42 stations were impacted with the brand activation. Meanwhile, the Kia Picanto’s showroom travelled around the city and throughout the country, dealerships were in normal activity, receiving potential customers interested in driving tests or car information, dealers were working closing deals with the potential buyers gathered in the bus showroom. Kia’s social network content was posting videos about the bus showroom, UGC and posts with the most important comparison: the car’s monthly payment vs the commute budget.

Results: OBJECTIVE 1: Increase Kia’s market share and recover its position among the top two brands in the retail vehicle industry. RESULT 1: We regained 3rd place in the industry market share the first month (February/March) and won 2nd place in the second month (March/April). During the campaign, Kia Picanto became the top-selling car in its category, accounting for 25% of all car sales in the industry. OBJECTIVE 2: Sell at least 50% of inventory in the three months (February- March-April) leading up to the campaign. RESULT 2: 100% of the inventory was sold before the completion of the planned 3-month campaign

(February-April). **OBJECTIVE 3:** To promote the characteristics of the Kia Picanto as a compact and affordable car. **RESULT 3:** 20 million impressions and generating USD\$2 million in earned media (in a market where the industry invest USD\$3.5 million yearly advertising).

Investment overview: Paid Media Expenditure, Under \$500 Thousand. Compared to other competitors in this category, the budget is less. Compared to prior year spend on the brand overall, the brand's overall budget this year is less. Production & other non-media expenditures: Under \$500 Thousand.

EXTRA DATA

On the use of public transport: The number of people who travel by bus daily in El Salvador is estimated at more than 2 million people. In other words, 7 out of 10 people in the capital use public transport, mainly buses. Women are the ones who use the bus the most as a means of transport. The *San Salvador 2022 Quality of Life Survey* determined that 66% of the capital's residents use public transportation. Out of every 100 women, 70 use the bus, and out of every 100 men, 59 use it. It is important to note that these are only estimates, as there is no accurate passenger counting system on all buses in the country. The number of people traveling by bus varies depending on the route, schedule, and day of the week. Rural areas have fewer public transportation options, so fewer people travel by bus.

About El Salvador's vehicle fleet: El Salvador's vehicle fleet is estimated at a total of 1,831,142 units (approximate), distributed as follows: automobiles, 787,725 (43.07%); motorcycles, 543,417 (30.22%); trucks and pick-ups, 278,000 (15.23%); buses and minibuses, 122,000 (6.72%); others, 99,000 (5.46%). The growth compared to the year 2023 is 8.15%. The evolution of the vehicle fleet over the last three years is reflected as follows: 2023, 1,700,442 units; 2022, 1,577,000 units; 2021, 1,440,000 units.

Official sources: The National Road Safety Observatory (ONSV) of the National Transportation Fund (FONAT) is the official source of information on the vehicle fleet in El Salvador. To check on the Vehicle Fleet Map:

<https://hub.arcgis.com/maps/mopvmt::mapa-del-parque-vehicular-el-salvador/about>
The Government of El Salvador's Transparency Portal also provides information on the vehicle fleet: <https://www.transparencia.gob.sv/>

Forward-looking statements: The vehicle fleet is expected to continue to grow in the coming years. The growth of the vehicle fleet is related to the country's economic growth, urbanization and the increase in the purchasing power of the population. The growth of the vehicle fleet also presents challenges, such as traffic congestion, air pollution and traffic accidents.

Note: the contents of this report were officially taken from the registered winning case, with full permission of those responsible.

