

IBM AP Social Smart Stories campaign overview



Challenge:

IBM is still predominantly associated with its legacy business and not viewed as an innovative brand. This can be largely attributed to the type of work that we've been running in the region - communications based on global stories that are not viewed as locally relevant in our markets. On top of that, by their B2C nature, key competitors such as Microsoft, Google and AWS have multiple opportunities to be present in the day-to-day lives of our audience. Overall, this has resulted in a drop in relevancy and share of online conversations across the Asia Pacific (AP) markets.

We also saw poor performance in social engagement across our IBM channels within the AP markets due to content that are heavily product and event-focused and at the same time not platform-centric or thumb-stopping. The potential of social media to make an impact for the IBM brand was not being fully leveraged in AP.



Approach:


To drive brand relevancy, resonance and social engagement for IBM in Asia Pacific, we proposed "Smart Stories", a regional content creation hub to help drive conversations for IBM in the social space by developing social-platform-centric, non-matching luggage and thumb-stopping content by curating over 300 stories from the region.

We identified the key themes that would resonate strongly among our AP audiences by deep diving peaks in online conversations which centred around stories of innovation, tech for good and partnerships. To make an even bigger splash in the social sphere, we also trendjacked topical moments as Wildlife Conservation Day and closely aligned our content to trending topics around COVID-19.

The social content developed was then leveraged on regional and local Twitter and LinkedIn handles across 10 markets in 5 different languages, stopping thumbs and grabbing eyeballs across the Asia Pacific.




TWITTER DROVE OVER
28M IMPRESSIONS


POST ENGAGEMENT
**+25% ABOVE
BENCHMARK**


**FIRST FULLY INTEGRATED
REGIONAL PROJECT** CONNECTING
BRAND AND SOCIAL FOR IBM GLOBALLY


DOUBLING
ORGANIC ENGAGEMENT

Results:

Smart Stories Phase 1
Our pilot beat benchmarks by a significant margin doubling organic engagement and increasing paid post engagement by +25%.

- Paid Social performed above IBM AP CA benchmarks with post engagement +25% above benchmark
- Organic posts performed strongly on the IBM AP Twitter handle.
- Post engagement: 1.8x the channel average
- Attention and advocacy: 2-3x the channel average

Smart Stories Phase 2 (ongoing)
In phase 2, we scaled our social content pilot across 2020, and optimise our approach across visual treatment, story curation, content distribution and media planning to further improve engagement. Interim performance:

- LinkedIn saw good content engagement rate, outperforming benchmarks in ANZ and IN by +43% and +42% respectively
- Twitter drove over 28m impressions

Value:

- PR coverage by Campaign Asia, Branding in Asia and Little Black Book
- The work developed was featured across IBM Global and Ogilvy Worldwide social platforms
- First fully integrated regional project connecting Brand and Social for IBM globally
- First of class vehicle that allowed IBM to showcase multiple regional client references in a single campaign
- Recognised by IBM Global as best example of social always-on and best example of how to work as an integrated team
- Aligned to Ogilvy Asia Growth Plan on Content Hub and Creative Leadership
- Additional 200K in fees and 220K OOP cost (third party)

Plan for 2021:

- To extend the scope of the campaign from social-only to incorporate a full customer experience by developing an end-to-end journey including a landing page to house IBM's regional stories
- To expand the 3-months social campaign into an annual always-on
- To align the social campaign to IBM brand direction towards hybrid
- To explore integration of social campaign between brand and PFM