

Costa Rica's living billboards

Living billboards bring the beauty of Costa Rica back to the city.



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Costa Ricans have forgotten about the natural beauty of their country because of the stress and everyday rush of city life. As a result, many of them have started taking vacations abroad and support for Costa Rica's tourism industry fell by 10%. To make people consider Costa Rica as a holiday destination, the Instituto Costarricense de Turismo decided to remind people about what was right in front of them.

To bring to the city the experiences of enjoying the different destinations that the country has to offer, living billboards were installed. These billboards used real people, playing the role of vacationers enjoying the country's attractions. For example, an actor rowing a canoe highlighted to passing drivers, the joy of Costa Rica's rivers. The billboard, erected above a busy motorway supported the weight of the actor as he dragged the canoe by a piece of rope tied around his waist.

Results

The campaign obtained a 76% recall among the target audience and 7% increment in the tourism sales industry, in spite of the economic crisis within the country. More than four million vehicles passed the billboards during the implementation period. This implementation generated word of mouth via consumers and the media, who wanted to ride the kayak. The total PR value was US\$298 000 (about R2.1 million) in free press plus the US\$40 000 (about R280 000) invested in human billboards.

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