

Sony

Company Background

Sony Pictures is the television and film production and distribution arm of the technology and media conglomerate Sony. Its group sales for 2010 are estimated at \$7.2 billion.

Objective

The In February 2010, Sony Pictures ran a campaign on Facebook ahead of the release of the romantic drama Dear John. One goal was to build awareness of the movie starring Channing Tatum and Amanda Seyfried. The other goal was to get more people to connect to the movie's Facebook Page – the free public profile that enables companies to share their business and products with Facebook users on an ongoing basis. Dear John represented the studio's largest social media campaign to date and focused on using social media marketing to spread word-of-mouth recommendations

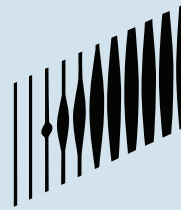
Approach

On January 11, 2010 – a month before the film's February 5 release date – Sony decided to run a type of media buy on Facebook's home page called a 'reach block', which guaranteed that Sony could reach every Facebook user that logged on that day. Sony ran several types of ads including Premium Engagement Ads that allowed Facebook users to interact with the Dear John brand, directly from the advertisement.

The ads consisted of Premium Event Ads and Premium Poll Ads, which invited users to vote on "the best part about chick flicks" from among several options, including "getting tips from the pros" or "sitting in the last row". The reach block used Facebook's anonymized and aggregated targeting to build word-of-mouth promotion for the movie among its core demographic of 13- to 24-year-old females. The studio typically tailors its ads according to its target audience. It has noticed that polling ads, for instance, tend to resonate more with females.

Facebook Executive Summary

Client:



**SONY
PICTURES**

Objective: Build awareness of the release date of the movie Dear John and drive fan growth for the romantic drama

Solution: A one-day reach block with Premium Like, Event and Poll Ads, targeting the movie's key 13- to 14-year-old female demographic

Key Lessons:

- By publicizing the movie's release on Facebook, a movie studio can dramatically increase awareness of a film
- Peer-to-peer recommendations are key in building an audience for a movie and Facebook helps automate word of mouth
- Facebook helps automate word of mouth
- Facebook polls can be used to sample consumer's intent to see a particular movie in order to determine if release dates for films are optimal when considering other upcoming releases

Results

- Some 298,853 people connected to Dear John's Facebook Page on reach block day – a 1,200 percent increase on the previous day's total
- More than 1 million people eventually connected to the Dear John Facebook Page by the opening day of the movie, marking the first time any Sony movie had achieved this milestone
- A study on the Facebook campaign conducted by media research firm Nielsen found that the ads drove a 16 percent increase in overall audience awareness of the film
- The same Nielsen study also found that the campaign led to a 2 percent increase in "purchase consideration" for the film

Movie Night With Channing



Two weeks was all it took for them to fall in love. Upload a video of your own love story on the Dear John Facebook page.

Can long distance relationships work?

- Yes, true love will last
- For a little while
- No, don't even try

115,810 people voted, including [Athalie Laguerre](#).

Channing's Message To You



Click on Dear John star Channing Tatum to see an exclusive message. Want more? Fan Dear John, opening 2/5 to get updates from Channing.

2,393,121 people like [Dear John](#).

Like

Future

The success of the Dear John campaign has led Sony to use the polling features available on Facebook to gauge interest in upcoming titles – and to validate or change release dates accordingly. The studio says this gives it an early sample of the intent to see a particular movie by giving the title and actor names, and comparing the data to other movies being released at the same time. With word of mouth being one of the top marketing drivers for getting people into the theater, Sony says the peer-to-peer recommendations on social networks like Facebook are invaluable.

As part of another strategy on Facebook, Sony is also getting talent involved in building online communities. For Dear John, Channing Tatum provided personal video messages for users who clicked to 'Like' the movie.

Movie Night With Channing



Two weeks was all it took for them to fall in love. Upload a video of your own love story on the Dear John Facebook page.

Can long distance relationships work?

- Yes, true love will last
- For a little while
- No, don't even try

115,810 people voted, including [Athalie Laguerre](#).