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Strategic Inspiration

CATCH OF THE WEEK

RUPAUL'S DRAG RACE: SHANTAY, YOU STAY. FOREVER

CARLOS RODRIGUEZ - 23/12/2020

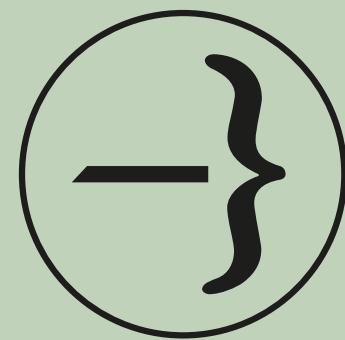
RUPAUL'S DRAG RACE: SHANTAY, YOU STAY. FOREVER



The fragmentation of the public and audience's by no means shrinks the size of the opportunity. And in seemingly countercultural proposals we find an inexhaustible source of inspiration.

RUPAUL'S DRAG RACE: SHANTAY, YOU STAY. FOREVER

THE GREAT STRATEGIC TAKEOUT



The new amplifiers are a planetary showcase for global audiences that show values and behaviours that are more transversal (and mainstream) than they might initially seem.

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WHY SHOULD I READ THIS?

Understanding minorities as "minorities" is a thing of the past (as well as being politically incorrect). Anyone can identify themselves in one or more niches or feel part of a fragmented audience with which they only share one value or way of understanding a subject.

Raising the universal values emerging from these sensitivities is an opportunity for brands that want to be headliners in the new contemporary world.

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WHAT ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?

"We are all born naked and the rest is drag." With this mantra, the drag queen talent show RuPaul's Drag Race has been conquering markets and the public's hearts, first in the United States and then in a number of other markets (including Spain, where it lands in 2021). This audiovisual franchise has gone from a low-budget television programme broadcast on Logo TV (LGBTQI specialist channel) to a worldwide phenomenon broadcast on VH1 in the US and Netflix worldwide. The programme has spawned a worldwide tour ("Werq the world"), musicals in Las Vegas, special editions (All Stars, Celebrity, Christmas Special), all kinds of merchandising, annual conventions (DragCon), albums, posters, films and more...

The key to its success is product truth — street cred: the ability to be credible and respected by the same source of inspiration from which it emerges and is continually nourished. The show is an homage to *Ball Culture*, a phenomenon that first appeared in 20s

New York and is a haven for the LGBTQI+ collective, especially since the 60s and the anti-racism movements spreading across the United States this decade. *Ball Culture* has been systematically appropriated by artists such as Madonna ("Vogue") or Ryan Murphy ("Pose"), who successfully garnered LGBTQI+ as a good advisor to their brand by sharing values and sensibilities.

This celebration of diversity of race, gender and sexual orientation has fostered expression and a proprietary language that RuPaul's Drag Race embodies. It is a talent show that has managed to elevate the drag queen profession. It has gone from being stigmatized and devalued to having the power to transform contestants into virtual rock stars, who become key assets of the franchise (and are managed in the same way as a brand). RuPaul's Drag Race has managed to reach an iconic status that has utterly transformed a category and a market, combining entertainment and the drag world.

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WHAT ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?

The franchise has nailed its brand identification, its business and what it sells. Far from being a programme exclusively targeting the LGBTQI+ collective (which would be its core audience), the franchise has a highly diverse close following, particularly of women, although also men, which has made it very appealing for lifestyle brands.

In fact, some of its special editions have featured mainstream personalities wanting to dabble with this world of transformation, breeding such contemporary values as freedom, tolerance, respect and empathy. RuPaul's Drag Race once again highlights the need to start segmenting our audiences according to their attitudes and values rather than along socio-demographic lines, as the former are crossover values, and the latter are more restricted and limited.

The crossover of this format is also palpable in the hybridization of the themes that make up the show. The audience can enjoy comedy, with different types of humour, acting, performance and fashion, with allusions to US and *queer* culture that appeal to the mainstream public, but also to insiders, with references for *connoisseurs*.

The result is that the phenomenon has not gone unnoticed by brands, which have seen in the values the franchise defends and its expression great opportunity to be contemporary, and to get some of RuPaul's *street cred* and Drag Queens cut.

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LINKS AND WHAT TO FOCUS ON

Paris is Burning, [documentary](#)

Rupaul's Drag Race Season 13, [Trailer](#)

Madonna - Vogue ([Official Music Video](#))

Pose, [Trailer](#)

- Presentation and representation of collectives
- Themes and values
- Aesthetic codes and art direction

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WHY YOU SHOULD BE INTERESTED

Because audiences, which are increasingly niche and fragmented, offer an opportunity to elevate mainstream values.

WHAT TENSION DOES IT RELIEVE?

Discomfort with gender norms and cultural impositions.

FROM A STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVE:

It is key to understand what universal values we are defending, what contribution we are making to the category/market in which we operate, and how we build credibility at grass roots level.

WHO MIGHT BE INTERESTED?

Any brand that wants to broaden its business perimeter and raise the perception of its category.

WHERE DO I IMPLEMENT IT?

In the segmentation of audience, in the selection of communication platforms and in the definition of the brand's value proposal.

HOW DO I IMPLEMENT IT?

By being rigorous without being exclusive, trying to understand what it is in the brand or category that can be elevated as a universal value.

HOW INNOVATIVE IS IT?

The amplification of proposals emerging from counterculture is not new, but its global projection and crossover appeal transcending the most obvious core target certainly is.

KEY CONCEPTS:

Entertainment, universality, niches, platforms, *street cred*

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I WANT IT FOR MY COMPANY/BRAND. WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

WHO IS USING IT ALREADY?

Other professions or cultural manifestations, such as freestyle MC battles or e-games, have become authentic global phenomena thanks to brands such as RedBull.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:

Credibility, consumer motivation and contemporary values.

HOW DO I GET A CLEARER IDEA?

Watching the evolution of RuPaul's Drag Race across the seasons (Netflix).

Attending J Balvin's Fortnite concert.

Watching some of the International FMS freestyle battles, such as Bnet VS Stigma in 2019.

HOW DO I SHARE IT WITH MY NETWORK?

"If we work a niche with respect and care and understand our brand and business core, we get a solid base on which continue to grow towards other, broader settings and audiences."

I'M INTERESTED IN IT FOR MY BRAND. TELL ME MORE!

This content comes from The Hunter's strategic inspiration tank. If you would like to know how over 15 years of research and mapping enable us to make strategic recommendations that are innovative and culturally relevant, please get in touch with us.

I WANT TO KNOW MORE

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Strategic Inspiration

The Catch is The Hunter's strategic think tank, via which the inspiration needed to take the best strategic decisions is shared in the form of resources, content and original ideas, which can be understood easily and applied immediately.

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