

Creating A Craveable Brand Experience

How brand activations were the secret sauce for an award-winning event.



About the Client

Our client is an American fast-food restaurant company with over 600 stores specializing in fried chicken finger meals.

The Challenge

Being unable to host their annual conference for several years due to the pandemic, our client looked to us to create an extra special event for their 2,000+ store leaders across the country. In recent years, the company had achieved significant growth in the U.S. and globally. They wanted to celebrate their store leaders and crews for their hard work and dedication by sharing their new benefits plans and communicating their next-level growth strategy. Instilling brand pride is a huge part of their culture and another of their goals was to create a fully immersive brand experience for their employees, focused on education, fun, and celebration.

The Solution

Creative Group led the collaboration to design a hugely successful experience that wove our client's unique brand identity into every activation. See below for details on how this event won a bronze award for **Best Overall B-to-B Environment** from Event Marketer.

Brand Activations

EXPO

Our brand experience team created a non-traditional EXPO experience with a variety of art installations and interactive areas. The goal: create a fun, collaborative experience focused on education, awareness and engagement. Weaving their brand identity into every activation at the EXPO was critical. Interactive areas included a recognition station – highlighting employees with milestone anniversaries, a “Call Me Wall” with phones connecting attendees to live people at HQ, a huge ball pit playground with oversized chicken fingers and fries – providing lots of fun photo ops. “Instagrammable” moments were around every corner. One of their food trucks was also featured, along with a mint condition 1967 red Cadillac and ‘70s era “Love Bus” that tours the



country, visiting local stores. Also featured was a virtual-reality station that led people through landmark restaurants, a booth highlighting the impact of their corporate charitable efforts, and a branded clothing ‘store’. There were interactive game areas throughout, featuring ping-pong, giant Connect 4 games and basketball shooting stations.

EGG HUNT

Sharing the love is a big part of our client's culture. It has been a tradition for many years for restaurant store leaders to host an annual egg hunt for their crews – a way to create engagement and fun with store employees. We re-created the legendary egg hunt in a park across the street from the host hotel. Over 10,000 eggs were “hidden” and participants searched the park collecting both regular and hidden-prize eggs.

A GENERAL SESSION ‘WOW’ EXPERIENCE

Our event stakeholders wanted a show-stopping experience within the General Session, building excitement to match their leadership's messaging. Our production team built a 150-ft long (9,000 pound) LED wall – a strategy to adequately fill the 240-ft wide ballroom and give everyone an immersive experience. The energy continued to build with amped-up dance music, lighting, and staging. There were 2 giant disco balls hanging (a nod to their brand) along with their mascot dog live on stage, creating inspiring moments across the 2-day sessions.

OFF-SITE CELEBRATIONS

The energetic welcome evening featured dinner, dancing and disco balls at the House of Blues. The

final night celebration took place at “The Factory” – an old warehouse that comfortably housed our large group. It was decked out in full ‘90s style décor – a nod to the opening of their first store in 1996. Artists were on hand, some painting a large canvas with the Timeless Horizon event theme and others customizing neon-inspired baseball caps for the audience. People were encouraged to wear retro ‘90s attire (and they delivered)! The venue was filled with ‘90s inspired games, music and entertainment. A local Dallas icon – Vanilla Ice – headlined the event and he had the audience fully engaged, bringing them up on stage to dance and sing the era's iconic songs. The event went on long into the night because people didn't want to leave!

ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITY:

HEADQUARTER TOURS

Our client is based in Baton Rouge but has a Restaurant Support Office housing over 500 crew members in Dallas, so it was key to host the event there. Employees had the opportunity to visit and meet with colleagues and gather information about offerings and services to support their store. Shuttle busses ran daily transporting over 1,000 people to and from their nerve center for brand-immersive tours of their facility.

The Outcome

The conference had a very short planning time – less than 90 days from start to finish, making it a wild achievement. Everyone felt the conference was very successful in that it connected employees with each other, communicated key messages, and boosted brand loyalty and pride.

“Our client contact said, “Thank you so much for your hard work and support in bringing the 2023 Timeless Horizon Conference to life! Creative Group was a fantastic partner and exceeded our expectations in such a short time frame. Thank you for being so supportive and flexible in bringing this amazing experience to life for all our attendees! We couldn't have done it without you!”