



jetBlue
AIRWAYS®

Bigwigs: Making Jetting newsworthy

Summary of the mission

Planning isn't always about unearthing a deep consumer or brand truth. Once in a while — if you're lucky — planning is about recognizing and seizing upon a moment in popular culture when your brand is perfectly poised as the answer. It helps when the client shares your enthusiasm about the opportunity, but of course they have to see work that inspires them to act. Planning can shape the content and tone of the message and the medium in which it appears, but ultimately planning must give the client the confidence to charge ahead — particularly during a time when everyone else is pulling back. This is a simple story about having the courage to seize the moment, and running with it.

The birth of Jetting

When JetBlue launched in 2000, they revolutionized air travel with low fares and lots of perks: free DIRECTV, extra legroom and friendly service. On JetBlue, there was no First Class, Business or Coach, every customer was treated equally — equally well. JetBlue quickly became the most beloved and talked-about player in the category and made thousands of fans along the way.

However, by 2007, the airline was facing growing pains. Ambitious expansion resulted in operational challenges, which culminated on February 14th when hundreds of passengers were held aboard planes at JFK during an ice storm. The fallout from 2/14 spun JetBlue into an identity crisis. For the next several months we worked together to recover their maverick role in the industry.

In 2008, we launched JetBlue's new brand platform: Jetting. The Jetting campaign harkened back to JetBlue's original challenge to the industry: Flying stinks, that's why we don't Fly, we Jet. Even though JetBlue had always been delivering the Jetting experience, it was time for them to call it their own.



Jetting was a success: the campaign was embraced by crewmembers and consumers, and it achieved all brand positioning objectives. We were developing the next phase of the campaign when we saw an opportunity to tell the Jetting story in a more topical way.

The new bad guys

In early 2009, as the economy continued to plunge, greedy bankers and business chiefs were monopolizing the news. The 24-hour media cycle kept us tuned into a never-ending parade of fiscal irresponsibility — from Bernie Madoff’s ponzi scheme to CEOs who collected enormous payouts while their empires crumbled. One particular executive perk became a symbol of excess: the private jet. The Big Three auto CEOs made headlines when they traveled to Washington begging for a bailout — on their private jets! Then, after receiving their bailout, Citibank bought a brand new jet with taxpayer money! The country was outraged. CEOs were demonized in the media and seen as grossly out of touch. Under so much scrutiny, corporate America was forced to wean itself off the perks of private jets and First Class — a clear opportunity for JetBlue.

“Big Three auto CEOs flew private jets to ask for Taxpayer money”



Jetting... for CEOs?

When we first launched the Jetting campaign, JetBlue was positioned as the antidote to the typical Coach experience. But, in this new moment, as business leaders were scaling back, we saw the opportunity to present the Jetting experience in a new way: being fiscally responsible *can* come with frills like leather seats, more legroom, friendly service, free snacks and even personal TVs.

While the messaging would speak directly to CEOs, they were really just the foil — clearly the target was broader. The key was celebrating the fact that traveling like a regular person wasn't so bad when you're Jetting on JetBlue. By tapping into this moment, the difference between Jetting and Flying was even more relevant — and more accessible — to everyone.

With all of America watching the latest CEO scandals, the moment was perfect for JetBlue to pitch its Coach product as an alternative to private jets, and for the media to take notice.

Only JetBlue

From the beginning, JetBlue has thought of themselves as a company “of the people.” In 2008, JetBlue CEO Dave Barger cut his own salary by 50% in recognition of challenges his company was facing. Not only does he not fly on private jets, but he also helps his fellow crewmembers clean up after landing.

This was a challenging time for advertisers. When dealing with a recession, the safe route was to be sober and restrained — but we knew that JetBlue had the credibility to push it further. JetBlue's egalitarian product and personality were positioned

perfectly as a response to these CEOs and their corporate jets. No other competitor could speak directly to this target or compare themselves to a private jet — Virgin America and other legacy airlines cater to Bigwigs with their Upper and First class service, and Southwest doesn't offer any perks onboard such as leather seats and free DIRECTV.

The time for courage

Because of the newscycle, the client needed to move swiftly and with confidence. As a challenger brand in challenging times, JetBlue was carefully planning their budgets. Yet we were asking them to take money from proven tactical efforts to support this initiative. It was a risky venture for the JetBlue brand to address the current economy, and then to poke fun at those who brought it down. Tone was critical: the JetBlue brand voice had always been optimistic and positive, balanced with honesty and pragmatism. To truly seize this moment, we needed to bite — but without leaving teeth marks. While it would have been easy to go after specific CEOs, we believed JetBlue's smart and cheeky commentary was stronger than jumping on the bandwagon of attack. The client saw the potential in the first print ad and we charged ahead.

Seizing the moment

The campaign launched with a full-page newspaper ad in *The Wall Street Journal* — the CEOs bible — and *The New York Times* Business section. Broadly, yet pointedly addressing our target, the tongue-in-cheek copy welcomed CEOs to the world of Jetting.

A message to all Hedge Fund Managers, Big Investment Bankers, Moguls, Tycoons, Captains of Industry, CEOs, CMOs, CTOs, CFOs—basically anyone with a “C” in their title—Beneficiaries of TARP (the Troubled Asset Relief Program), Derivative Traders, Underwriters of Mortgage-Backed Securities, Former Treasury Secretaries, Recipients of Secret Seven-Figure Bonuses, Owners of \$35,000 Antique Commodes, Big Cheeses, Bigwigs, Head Honchos, Muckety-Mucks, and anyone and everyone else who might be rethinking that next trip on a private jet...

WELCOME ABOARD

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jetblue.com/welcomebigwigs

And the response was immediate.

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February 18, 2009, 1:10 pm

John Thain, Robert Rubin, Dick Fuld: Forget Private Planes. How About JetBlue?

Posted by Heidi N. Moore

Of all the indignities visited upon former Lehman Brothers CEO Dick Fuld, one of the most public ones was his effort to fly commercial. In January, Page Six of the New York Post ran an item about Fuld and his wife, Kathy, fumbling with the JetBlue Airways automated check-in kiosk at Palm Beach, Fla.

Fuld's discomfort meant the zeitgeist seemed to be going their way. The incident set the ball rolling for a "Welcome Bigwigs" campaign, a handy manual for flying commercial for executives who are used to lusher transportation. There's no shortage of material. One new JetBlue ad references "Former Treasury Secretaries," "Recipients of Secret Seven-Figure Bonuses," and "Owners of \$35,000 Antique Commodores." That sounded like Robert Rubin and John Thain to us. (Although Thain is known as a NetJets guy, preferring the fractional-ownership route.)

Since that brouhaha over how auto executives flew private to Washington on behalf of their impoverished companies, private jet travel is out, and traveling with the masses is in. Last week, Goldman Sachs Group CEO Lloyd Blankfein, Citigroup CEO Vikram Pandit, Morgan Stanley's John Mack flew commercial to get to Washington for their grilling by a House committee, while J.P. Morgan CEO Jamie Dimon took the Amtrak Acela.

A message to all Hedge Fund Managers, Big Investment Bankers, Moguls, Tycoons, Captains of Industry, CEOs, CMOs, CTOs, CFOs—basically anyone with a "C" in their title—Beneficiaries of TARP [the Troubled Asset Relief Program], Derivative Traders, Underwriters of Mortgage-Backed Securities, Former Treasury Secretaries, Recipients of Secret Seven-Figure Bonuses, Owners of \$35,000 Antique Commodores, Big Cheeses, Bigwigs, Head Honchos, Muckety-Mucks, and anyone and everyone else who might be rethinking that next trip on a private jet...

WELCOME ABOARD

As breaking news fueled the messaging and its relevance, we kept the idea going. Immediately after we launched our initial newspaper ad, in his first speech to Congress, President Obama railed against egregious corporate spending, specifically calling out private jets. A day later, we followed up with another newspaper ad.

Dear CEOs,

Not sure if you caught the President's message the other day—looks like the days of padded paychecks, fancy drapes and private jets are over.

But hey, there is a bright side. The days of comfy leather seats, free live TV and indulging in free snacks are just beginning.*

WELCOME ABOARD

jetBlue
HAPPY JETTING
jetblue.com/welcomebigwigs

*And for all you Hollywood bigwigs, service to LAX starts June 17.

We also produced three radio spots in a matter of days, which empathized with CEOs: *“It’s tough being a high-flying corporate executive these days, especially now that you have to answer to Congress every time you hop on your private jet, but look on the bright side, now you get to try JetBlue.”* Each spot pointed out similarities between JetBlue and their old private jets — leather seats, plenty of room and free entertainment — and ended with a special call-to- action tailored to our CEOs, “Have your assistant’s assistant book your flight at JetBlue.com today.”

As we continued to get more coverage, we wanted to keep pushing the idea further, yet had no budget for TV media. We created three viral how-to videos called “The CEO’s Guide to Jetting,” which introduced CEOs to services such as electronic check-in and the novelty of traveling among “regular people.”

The CEO’s Guide to Jetting



The videos were edited to create rich media banners, which appeared on mainstream news sites, such as CNN and MSNBC as well as populist hubs such as Huffington Post. The banners all drove the viewer to welcomebigwigs.com.



[Book travel](#) :: [Manage your flights](#) :: [Travel deals](#) :: [Where we jet](#) :: [TrueBlue® program](#)

The CEO's Guide to Jetting

An introduction to commercial air travel for CEOs only.
No minions, lackeys, or "regular" people allowed.

		
Chapter 1 Welcome Aboard	Chapter 2 The Airport	Chapter 3 The Flight

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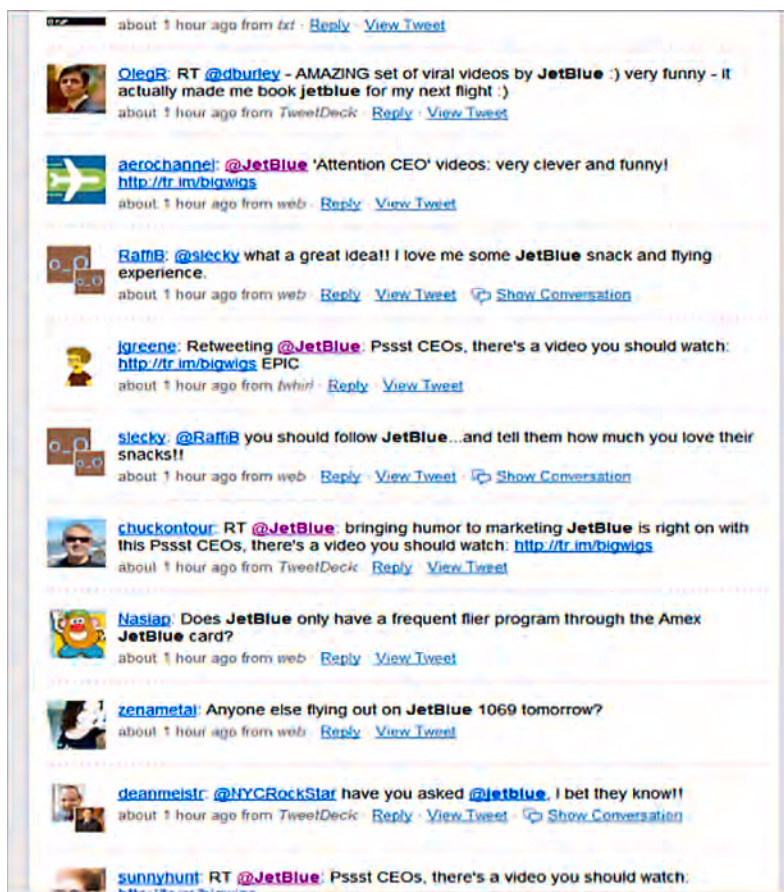
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Big results

The consumer press response to the Bigwigs campaign was tremendous — many local and national outlets, including the

Today show and CNN, aired one or two full-length video chapters. On Huffington Post, the campaign received a record number of click-throughs. Twitter helped to drive even more exposure. JetBlue was a pioneer on Twitter, and via their 240K+ followers, the videos were given a forum and exponential reach. Twitter drove even more viewers to the Bigwigs Web site which received 100K hits the first day.





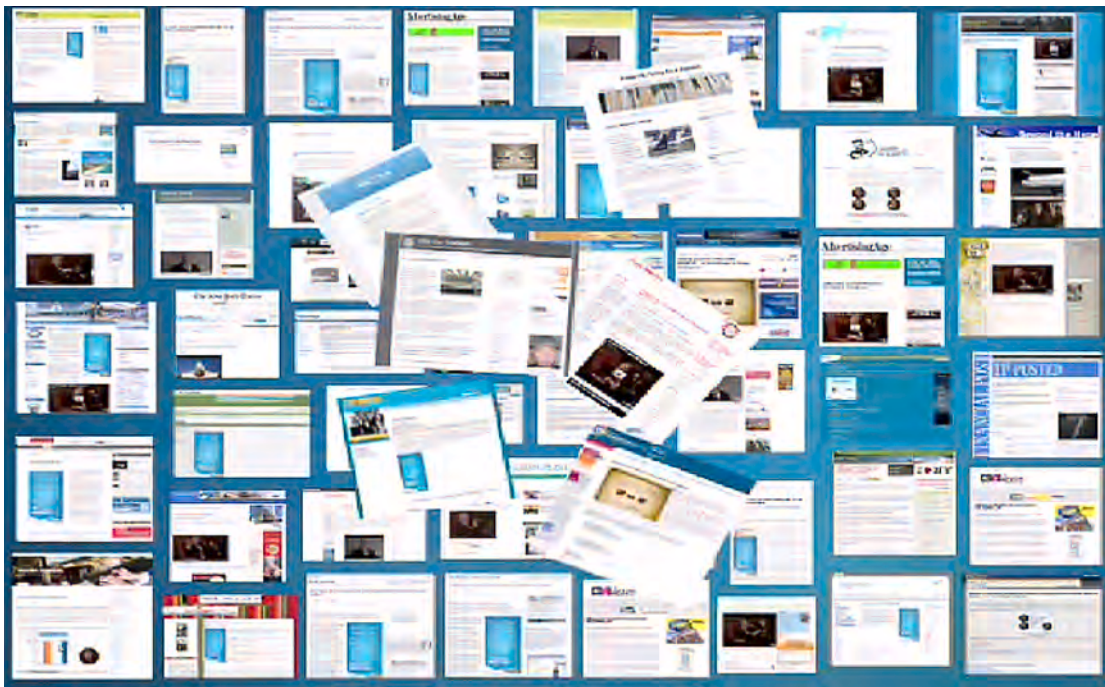
Further proof of the campaign's success: the National Business Aviation Association (an organization of private jet companies) was up in arms, insisting JetBlue stop running Bigwigs immediately.



In 10 days, the Bigwigs campaign generated over 40 million media impressions, giving JetBlue over \$3M in free publicity — for less than the cost of one TV spot (or .004% of a private jet).

Three months later, we were thrilled to see the Bigwigs print ad on the front page of *The New York Times* (May 14), with Stuart Elliott praising JetBlue as one of the few brands who captured consumer sentiment during this time.

Across the country, the press lauded JetBlue as clever and innovative. Within the company, crewmembers were filled with pride, feeling that JetBlue had gotten its sass and moxie back. Ultimately, JetBlue wasn't just commenting on the news, JetBlue was the news.



Seizing the future

While we continue to demonstrate the Jetting difference in traditional advertising, we've been inspired to trust our instincts a lot more. Having a courageous client in your corner certainly helps, but seizing the moment needs to be an ongoing rallying cry. As the client begs for a follow-up to Bigwigs, we'll continue to create moments where JetBlue is the solution.