Brand Channel - Putting the 'LA' in Play, SoCal Students Seek to Rebrand Los Angeles

Posted by Catherine Straut on December 23, 2014

Los Angeles has long been associated with beach-goers, blondes and Hollywood bombshells, but recently it's become a major hub for tech, advertising and media. To reflect the growth and change the conversation about the city's culture, students at Loyola Marymount University’s M-School: Institute of Marketing participated in a contest with the aim of rebranding LA, modernizing the city's image to reflect its evolution.

The judging panel included some of the ad industry’s big names, such as Eric Johnson, President and Founder of Ignited; Krizstina Holly, Entrepreneur-in-Residence for the LA Mayor’s Office; Jerry McGee EVP of 4A’s Western Region; and Angela Pih, Managing Partner at SelectNY. Students had 15 minutes to present their idea showcasing how the city offers "a unique place where businesses prosper due to a climate of creativity and innovation," according to the assignment prompt.

The winning group is "Team Santa Monica," comprised of students Natalie Alaverdian, Sabrin Budhrani, Nathan Poore and Nenah Bond. The four created Make Your Play, a website that includes a full promotional video as well as all brand communication assets—out of home, digital, experiential, media and more.

Commenting on the quality of the work overall, Krizstina Holly observed that "The best presentations started with the strengths of LA that we can own as a brand—our playfulness, diversity, inventiveness, and creativity—and built on those. Today, simply creating media and telling a story gets lost in the clutter; creating experiences, on the other hand, and inviting people to co-create that new narrative makes a story worth sharing! Mobile trucks, blank billboards, mystery tents, and personality tests were all some of the creative ideas that I can already see sparking new ideas in the mayor's office."

"I was blown away by the quality of the thinking and execution," Johnson added. "Many of the ideas could be commercially executed for the city—and should be."