



2015 JAY CHIAT AWARDS
VERIZON SXSW DISRUPTION
REGIONAL CATEGORY

CAMPAIGN SUMMARY

Every year, the world descends on Austin. And there's nowhere else you'd rather be. Unless you're an Austinite.

That's the simple truth we leveraged to win the hearts and minds of Austinites and propel Verizon forward in a market that hadn't seen significant positive brand momentum in decades.

You see, Austin – along with most of Central Texas – is AT&T country. Verizon is dominated in media spend, local sponsorships and on-the-ground presence. So, when we were asked to disrupt the market that prides itself on being left-of-center, we knew an ordinary approach wasn't an option.

We decided to go big. We honed in on SXSW - the busiest time of year – and listened to what the locals were saying about their world-renowned festival. That's when we saw the opportunity to bring a hug to the gun fight.

Instead of trying to outshine AT&T in their role of SXSW super-sponsor, Verizon would sponsor the people of Austin themselves. We would take to social media to hear their troubles and provide some much-needed relief during their busiest time of the year.



THE BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Verizon Wireless is the nation's leading wireless provider. But they've been a distant competitor in Austin for decades, because Central Texas belongs to AT&T. In fact, Verizon is a distant third in this anomaly of a market.

The challenge was simple to say, but seemingly impossible to do:

Develop a disruptive campaign in Austin to drive consideration and brand love.

In our toughest competitor's backyard.

During the busiest time of year.

With little-to-no paid media budget.

THE CONSUMER

You don't have to look too far beyond their Naked Bike Race, BYOB mini-golf or Chicken Shit Bingo to know that Austinites are a bunch of wonderful weirdos. They are a close-knit community chock full of traditions and pride. And while they welcome outsiders, there is a strong cultural undercurrent of wanting to preserve the rare alchemy that makes their city so special.

When it comes to Verizon, focus groups showed that there wasn't a product or service gap. Verizon simply was not in the consideration set. AT&T is so ingrained in the daily lives of Texans that it leaves very little room for other competitors. And price-drops or promos can't buy an Austinite's soul.

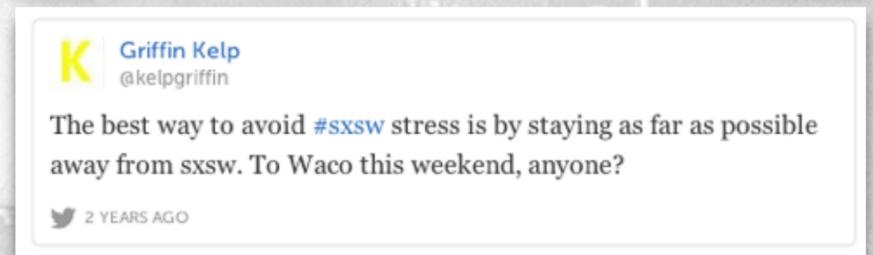


THE CULTURAL OPPORTUNITY

Austin is the home of SXSW, one of the world's largest festivals for interactive, film and music. **For 10 days each year, the world descends on Austin, and everyone wants to be there. Except Austinites.**

Because along with all the amazing creative firepower comes gridlock traffic, hoards of tourists and never-ending lines.

This insight was hidden in the form of a local inside joke, but it was prevalent in social conversation of Austinites prepping for SXSW. A cry for help that went unanswered, because people assumed there was nothing that could be done. That's when we realized our size could be a benefit. What if Verizon stepped in to help the people of Austin when every other brand was helping the tourists that were invading their town?



THE CREATIVE SOLUTION

We sided with the locals and brought some sanity to an insane time.

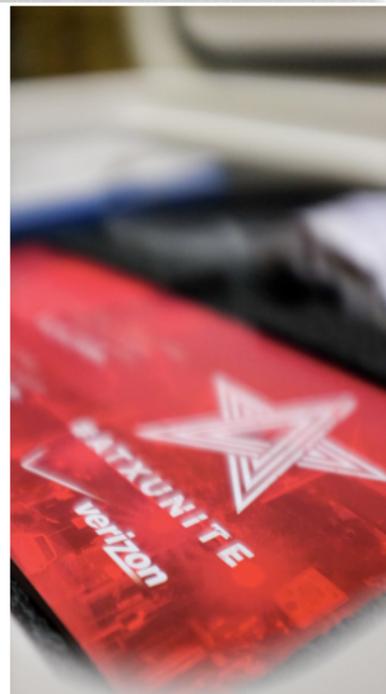
We engaged local Verizon employees and sent a cross-functional team of well over a dozen agency folk to listen to local SXSW conversations and deliver real-time, real-world relief to Austinites in need.

So, we created a campaign. Gave it a hashtag.
And set out to make SXSW about Austinites.



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WE SEEDED THE CONVERSATION WITH LOCAL INFLUENCERS



We began by seeding the conversation. We went well beyond Klout scores to identify a small list of content experts and influencers in the Austin market.

We then sent each of them a personalized Yeti cooler filled with Verizon technology, like noise-cancelling headphones, that would help them survive the coming storm, a message relevant to their passions and some locally crafted beef jerky for good measure.

WE CREATED ICONIC AUSTIN EXPERIENCES

We steered clear of traditional media to support our untraditional approach, and sought out local partners that could help remind consumers that Verizon is a part of their community.

The list ranged from local favorites like Houndstooth Coffee to indoor skydiving legend iFLY to Franklin Barbecue – a joint so legendary there is a Twitter handle that monitors the famous 3-hour line you often see out front.

No matter who the partner, the goal was the same: Provide an unforgettable, amped-up experience that helps Austinites feel like their city is once again theirs.



WE HAND-DELIVERED REAL-TIME RELIEF

This was the heart of the whole campaign, and what made it stand out from anything Austinites had ever seen before. We followed a laundry list of existing hashtags like #ATX and #SXSW, and we created one of our own: **#ATXunite**.

But we did a lot more than just listen. We answered every valid complaint or cry for help we heard from Austinites. In real time. With real-world solutions.

A social media command center and a fleet of branded SUVs and bikes fought through the crowds to bring locals the latest technology with personalized touches based on their individual situations.

To further drive excitement and grow the movement, we recapped several days with promotional video tweets created from real footage from our efforts. All created, approved and posted in less than 24 hours.



Garrett D'Entremont
@GarrettCDent

As an Austinite I'll be following #ATXunite all week! Thanks @Verizon

2:33pm · 16 Mar 2015 · Twitter for Android

MykleT
@MykleT

Lived in Austin for a long time never seen a brand reach out to locals like @Verizon #ATXunite

9:40pm · 17 Mar 2015 · Twitter for iPhone

2 RETWEETS 5 FAVORITES

Jerod Morales
@jerodmorales

So fun seeing so many friends get hooked up by @VerizonWireless - you guys officially win #SXSW #ATXunite

2:58pm · 19 Mar 2015 · Twitter for iPhone

2 FAVORITES

VERIZON WIRELESS...

YOU THE REAL MVP

Forty Acres Coffee @fortyacresco #ATXunite pic.twitter.com/MDFxeu3ua

Josh Wiggins
@JoshuaLWiggins

Don't worry everyone. @VerizonWireless is gonna help us get through #SXSW this week. #ATXunite.

12:31am · 16 Mar 2015 · Twitter for iPhone

1 RETWEET 2 FAVORITES

Rockin it
@dkariel

@VerizonWireless thank everything! I can't say it. The group of peeps Run events are fantastic, so #Atxunite

6:23pm · 19 Mar 2015 · Twitter for A

Kyle, TX, United States

THE PEOPLE OF AUSTIN RESPONDED

Allison Morris
@allijmorris

@VerizonWireless I love you so much. #ATXunite pic.twitter.com/heqj6HWMsT

11:51am · 18 Mar 2015 · Twitter Web Client

Lorinda
@onthegojo

#ATXunite, You guys are amazing! Thanks for making life easier for us today! Great food, awesome location! Austintes are in love!

2:12pm · 19 Mar 2015 · Twitter for Android

1 RETWEET 1 FAVORITE

April Reynolds
@araerey

Guys, @VerizonWireless is killing the #SXSW game right now.

10:45am · 19 Mar 2015 · Twitter for iPhone

Megan Hoeky
@hoeky03

Free coffee at @dojocoffee thanks to Verizon! Helps ease pain of SXSW & the butchered spelling of my name #ATXunite

9:22 AM · 17 Mar 2015

2 RETWEETS 1 FAVORITE

365 Things Austin
@365ThingsAustin

If you're an Austin local you have to follow @VerizonWireless & the #ATXUnite hashtag, they're doing so much cool stuff for locals :)

6:56pm · 17 Mar 2015 · Twitter Web Client

4 RETWEETS 12 FAVORITES



Dominican Joe
@dojocoffee

Happy Tuesday! Verizon is buying coffee this morning. #ATXunite

8:14 AM · 17 Mar 2015

3 RETWEETS 4 FAVORITES

Reply to @dojocoffee

Rebecca Darling @RWeThereYetMom · 3m
Austinite!! @VerizonWireless does it again!! RT @dojocoffee: Happy Tuesday! Verizon is buying coffee this morning. #ATXunite

Austin Trends
#HaveUFoundTuTV Promoted by TuTV #SXSW The Jinx The Road Warrior Yung Lean Tim Tebow Spring Break Will Ferrell #TheWalkingDead LeBron

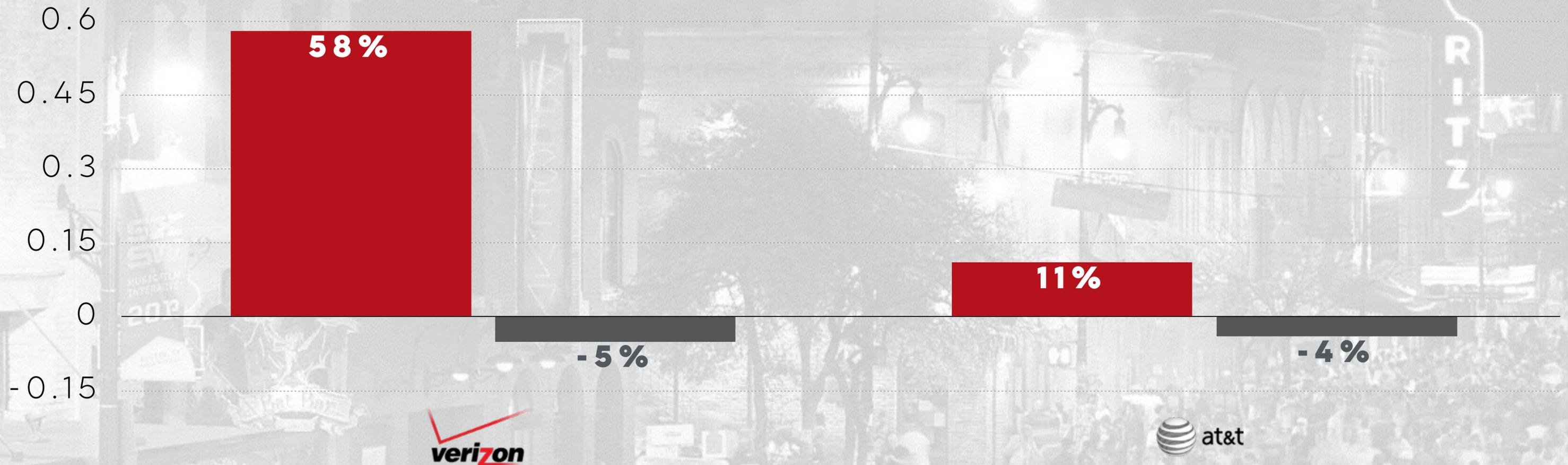
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Katie
@Katie...

Thanks @V awesome s #SXSW gre work! #ATX pic.twitter.c

AND SHOWED US THEIR LOVE

NET SENTIMENT



Source: Crimson Hexagon

Keywords: (Verizon, SXSW, ATXunite) VS. (ATT&T, ATT, SXSW)

■ Positive ■ Negative

AND SO DID THE MEDIA

THE
HUFFINGTON
POST

DIGIDAY

TexasMonthly



Digitally
Approved
blog

Verizon launches #ATXUnite hashtag to help locals 'survive' SXSW

Share 0 Tweet 12 LinkedIn Share 1 Google+ 0 Share Email reddit this!

Verizon has launched the hashtag #ATXUnite to help locals of the Texas city cope with the thousands of out-of-towners who will flood the area during South by Southwest (SXSW) over the next week and a half.

Last year alone, almost 14m hotel rooms were booked during the festival, which includes music, film, tech, trade shows, and much more. While this brings considerable capital to the city-- \$218m in 2013-- locals feel much frustration from having strangers storm their home.

To vent, Austinites are now able to utilize the Verizon hashtag, and may even be offered relief by Verizon's on-site crew.

In addition, locals will be given free lunches from famous restaurant, Franks BBQ, on Monday, March 16.

For more from the festival, [click here](#).



Verizon launches #ATXUnite hashtag to help locals 'survive' SXSW

Verizon to airlift aid to SXSW-addled Austinites

700

Tanya Dua | March 13, 2015 Follow @tanyadua

f 411 t 211 in 7

Pity the poor Austinite this week: The tech and media bacchanal that is SXSW kicks off today. Last year some 55,000 attendees descended on the Texas capital (population 885,000) over the course of the week, overrunning it with geeks, dweebs, thinkfluencers, gurus and all the attendant mayhem.

This year Verizon is coming to the aid of the poor locals who couldn't afford to skip down during the big show. Along with agency (Omitted for Chiat entry), the telecom company is launching "Austinites Unite" today, a campaign geared to help Austin's own get through the craziness.

Verizon is asking Austinites to use the hashtag #ATXUnite to share their frustrations on social media, and tracking the responses in real-time to send relief their way.

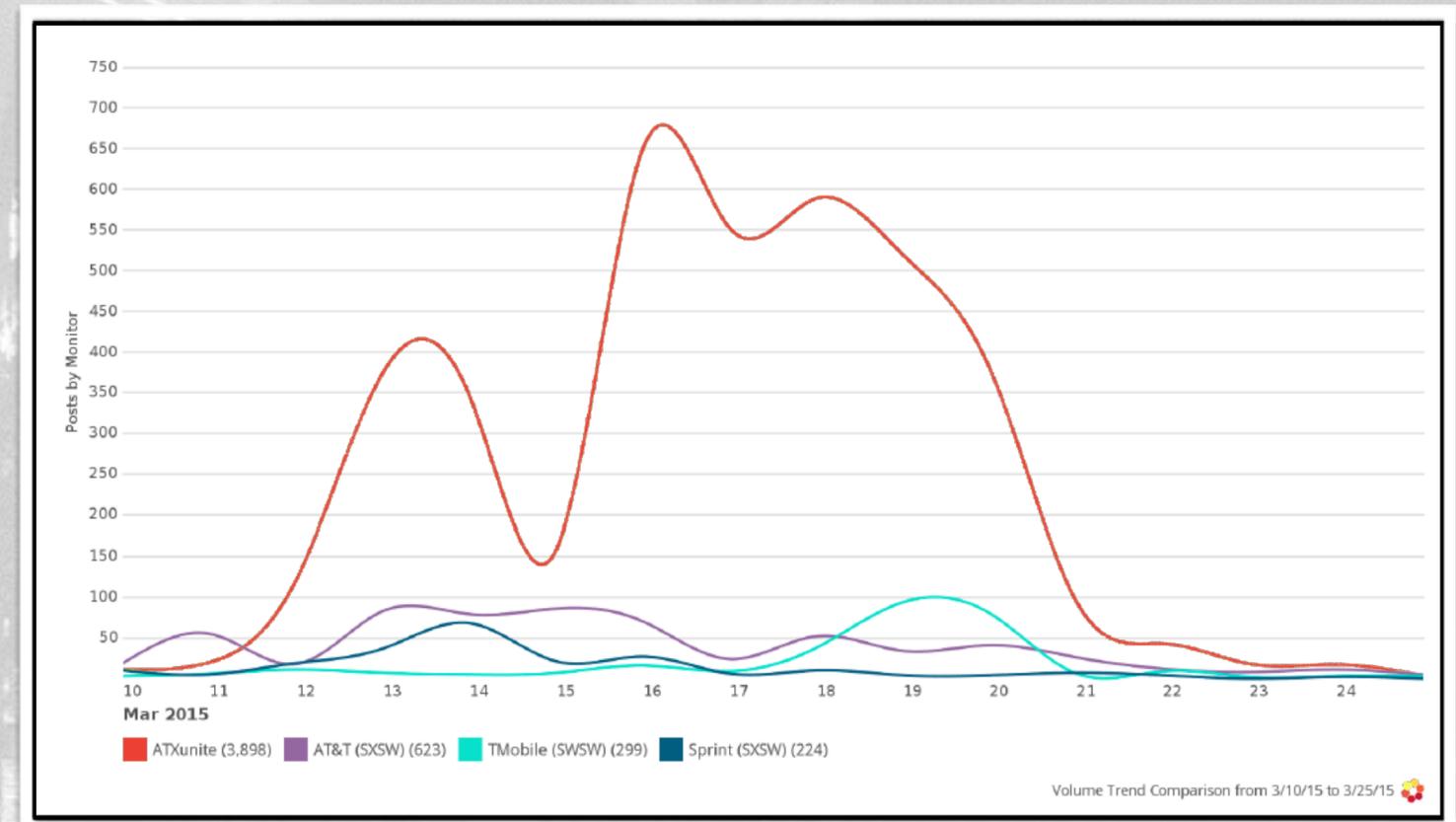
WE STOLE AN UNFAIR SHARE OF THE CONVERSATION

OVER 96 MILLION POTENTIAL IMPRESSIONS

Our goal for the campaign was to exceed 22 million impressions – the expected reach for a traditional media campaign at the same spend level.

By focusing on the people, rather than the event itself, we became the most relevant sponsor of the real Austin.

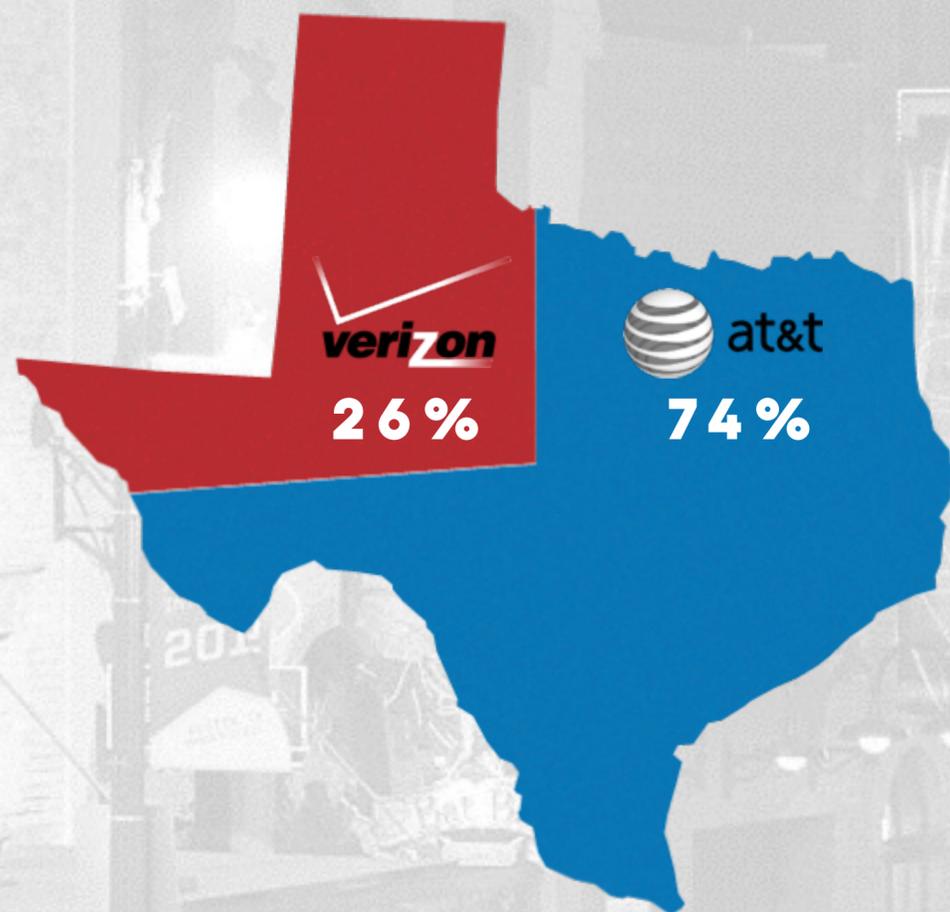
Thanks to the reaction from the people of Austin, we not only exceeded our campaign goals, but also dominated the event’s official “super-sponsor.”



#ATXUnite drove 4X the conversation of competitors combined

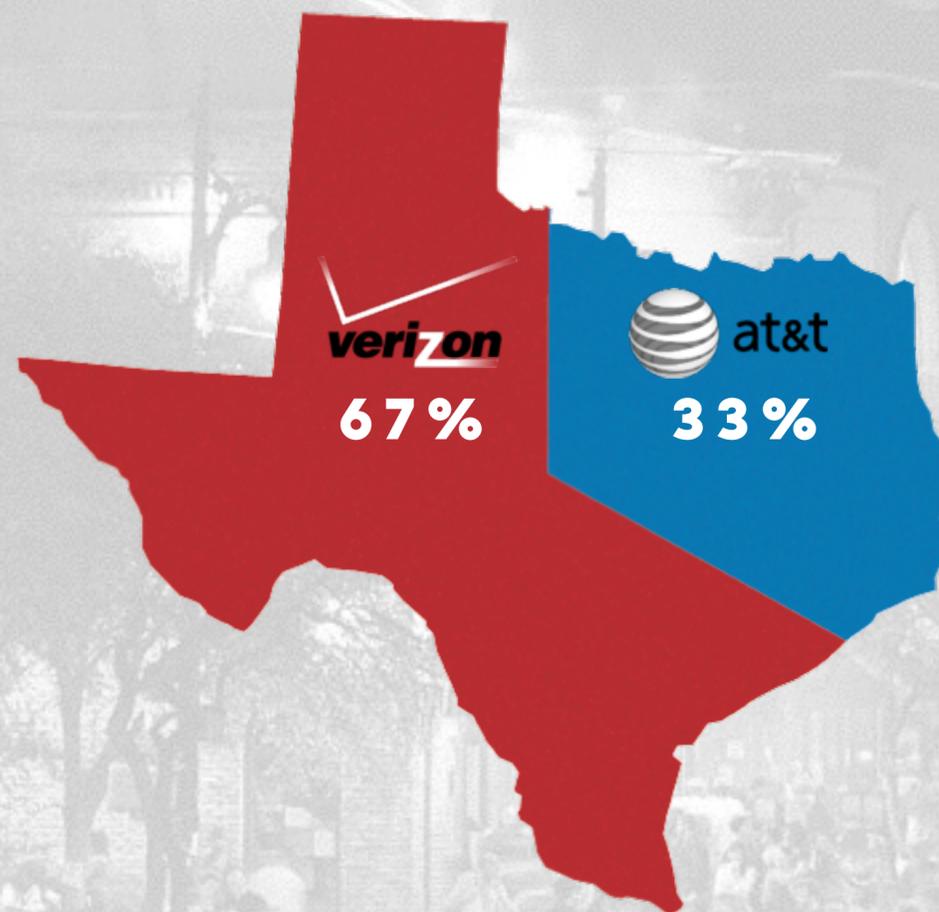
WE BECAME THE MOST TALKED ABOUT CARRIER IN AUSTIN

Austin SOV: Pre-Program



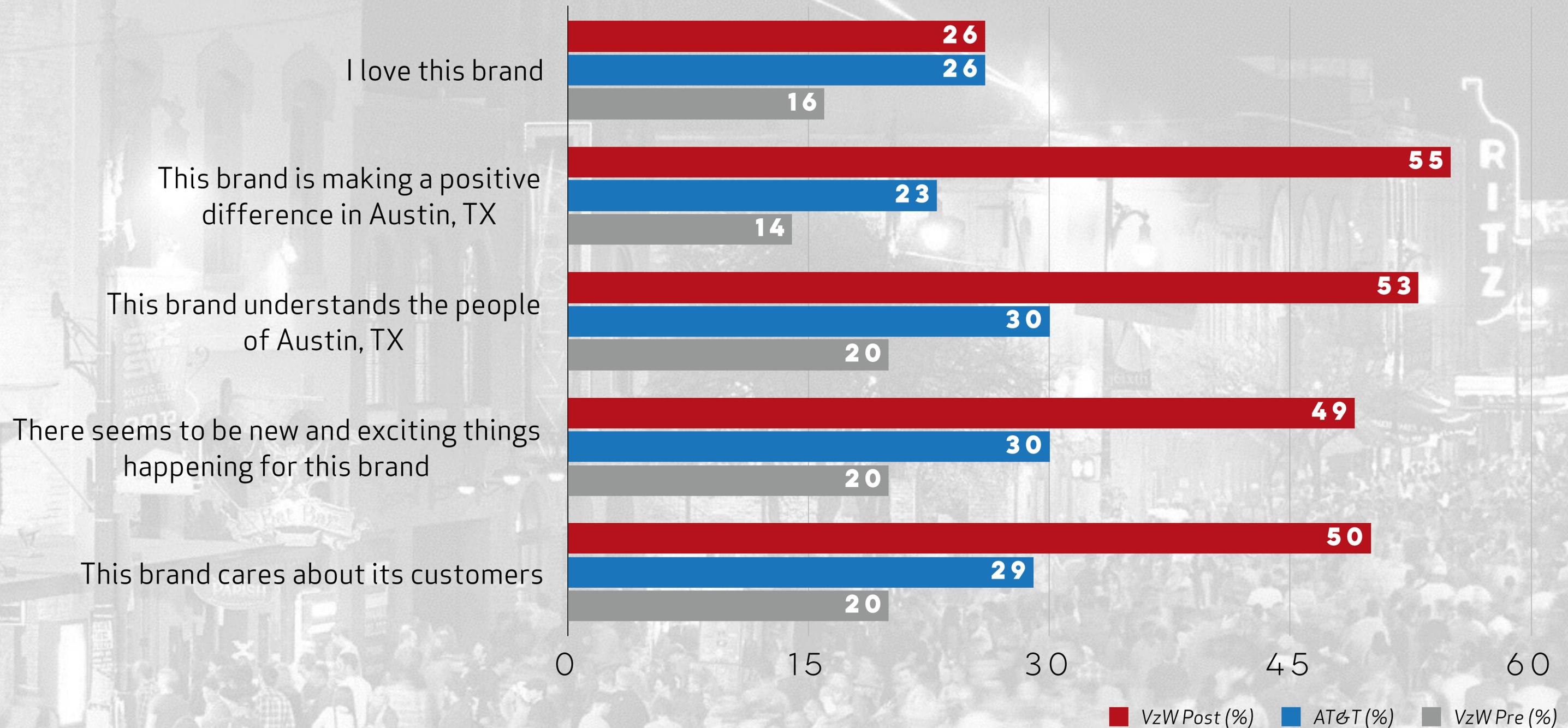
03.08.2014 - 03.09.2015

Austin SOV: During Program



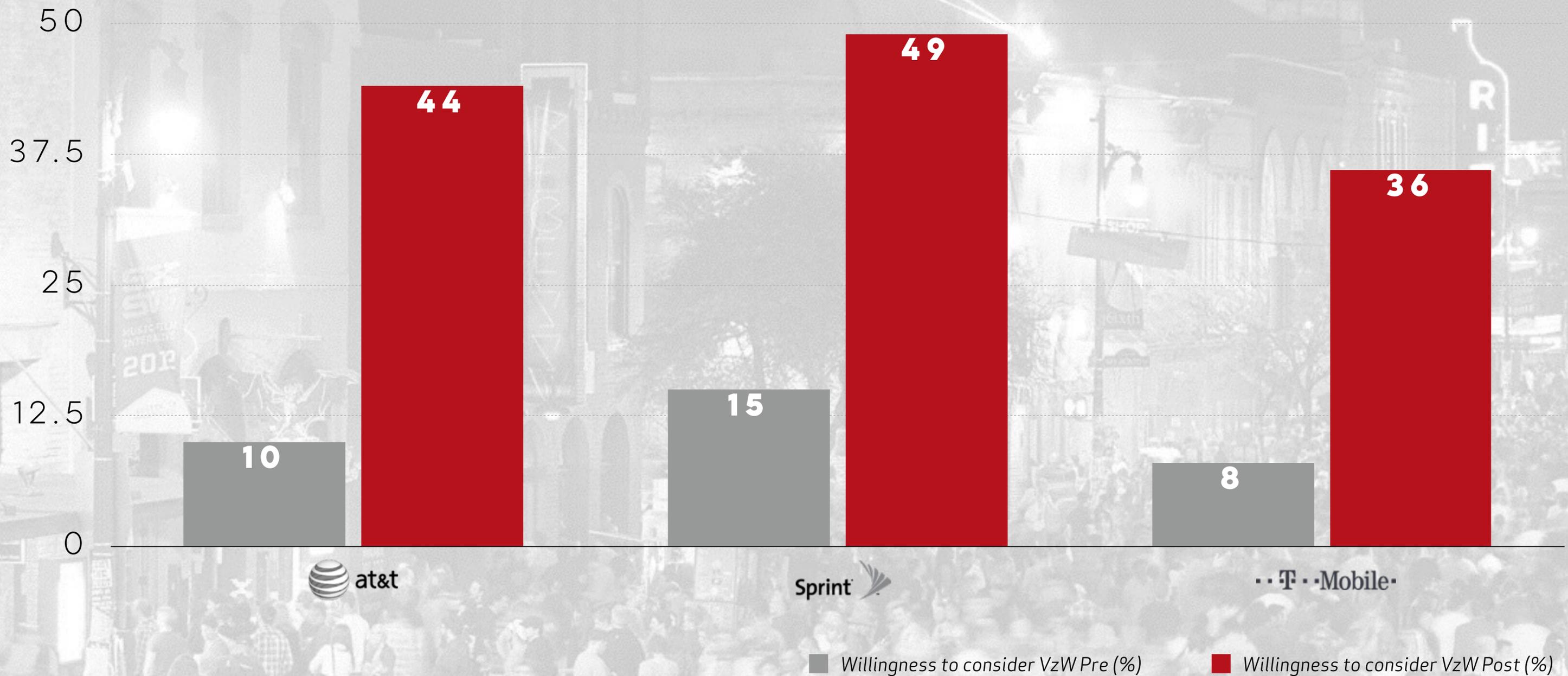
03.10.2015 - 03.25.2015

WE CHANGED PERCEPTIONS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN TWO DECADES



WE MADE SOME PEOPLE RECONSIDER THEIR CARRIER OF CHOICE

LIKELIHOOD OF CHOOSING VERIZON VS OTHER CARRIERS



THANK YOU, AUSTIN

At the end of the campaign, we saw an enormous lift across every brand and business metric we measured.

But the most exciting result was that Austinites did more than accept Verizon as a part of their community. They adopted the hashtag, took our mission as their own and grew it into something we could never have done on our own.

17% of the total conversation on our hashtag was from local businesses who joined in to help spread the word and deliver some relief of their own. And as the buzz grew, the community grew – replying to each others’ tweets and gathering at our daily events. Twitter handles became familiar faces, tweets became handshakes and Verizon became an undeniable presence in Austin.



ATXUNITE.COM