



# IKEA

## Inspiration Boxes

Jay Chiat Award Entry for Regional Strategy



# Inspiration Boxes

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Every July 1st in Montreal 225,000 people move all at once. It's called "Moving Day" and it leads to all kinds of chaos. In this tradition, IKEA has a unique sales opportunity. With the help of IKEA's whole home solutions we helped people make their place feel like home.

With people's attention directed at the intensity of the move, we made IKEA impossible to miss by distributing free moving boxes. This ran successfully for years before we tackled another issue – the boxes are out-of-mind once the move is over.

We found new meaning through the insight that seeing is believing when it comes to choosing furniture. IKEA home storage solutions were printed onto moving boxes that matched the exact size and colour of the real thing, and then hung them up for the taking in the middle of town.

By recognizing the need for inspiration after the move and not just the functional need of boxes, this case proves that the key to media effectiveness and innovation is understanding your consumer's emotional journey, and not just where, but when they are most receptive. The 2014 Moving Day saw a 16% increase in store visitors, and 6% increase in sales versus previous year.



## THE CASE

### *Say HELLO to the "Anxious Urbanite"*

Since the 18th Century, the Quebec government has required that all urban leases be made for the same time period every year. The law was enacted to make sure that nobody was being evicted from his or her home during harsh Quebec winters. Since its humble beginnings, the law is now a deeply rooted tradition that causes havoc every July 1st.

When 225,000 young, urban dwellers move all at once, you can imagine the sense of pressure and frustration towards the big day. Moving services are all booked, working around the clock, and there's a serious demand for moving supplies & boxes. Let's assume the average two-person apartment will need about 4 large, 15 medium, and 10 small boxes for a smooth and organized move. With 225,000 people doing the same thing, this equates to over 6.5M boxes, fought over at grocery stores and purchased at premium price tags.

The result of this chaos is what the planning team called the "anxious urbanite", representing both a sales opportunity and a communication challenge for IKEA.



## *First came the Moving Box*

In 2011, we launched the IKEA Moving Day campaign. It was a well-planned strategy to find a way into the hearts and minds of thousands of Montrealers (or anxious urbanites) living through this stressful occasion. Our first way in was handing out thousands of moving boxes to make one part of their move just a little bit better. Yes, it was an act of kindness, but to the people of Montreal, it meant even more. It meant that IKEA understood their needs and what they were going through. It's not every day that a global brand takes on such a focused initiative.

As planners, we saw the moving boxes as an incredibly effective and innovative media vehicle. The program drove a lot of affinity for the brand, to the point where the boxes are looked forward to, talked about, and expected. Every year we saw another increase in sales vs. previous year, so we had an increasing amount of pressure to innovate and make our boxes even more special than the

previous year. How do we make sure our act of kindness drives even more exceptional business results? How do we make our boxes even more relevant? More useful? More inspirational?

And, perhaps most important, how do we exceed the previous year's sales (yet again) by driving more traffic in-store? We knew we had to tighten the relationship between helping people move and our home solutions.



## *We stepped back and looked at the whole journey*

To make our boxes even more relevant, we dug into the emotional journey of a move. Sometimes you have to step back and look at the whole picture before you find new inspiration. The journey can be summed up quite simply in four phases:

- 1. Confidence:** It's over 30 days before the move. You're excited about having just signed your new rental agreement. You're calm, composed, feeling prepared for the move, and thinking about what you're going to leave behind or throw away.
- 2. Distress:** It's the last week before your move. With every task you complete, you discover five more you never even thought about. Boxes and moving supplies are desperately needed as you empty out closets and storage units.
- 3. Chaos:** It's moving day. Your stress level is at a max as you scramble to pack-up the last of your things. Emotions run high and low all day long.
- 4. Excitement:** It's the next day. You start unpacking and your stress becomes excitement for all the ways that you can personalize your apartment to exactly how you want it. You start making lists of things you need to finish the space.



## *It's in this journey we found new purpose*

Any further attempts at interrupting while they are distressed, or in a state of chaos, would prove to be difficult. Advertising is largely ignored as their heads are down just getting through it.

It's important to note that IKEA was very happy with the performance and reaction to the current moving box program. It seems obvious, but when you're briefed on one thing it can sometimes be hard to sway it in a new direction, especially when the current program has been successful year after year. But, that was our motivation. The pressure was on, so we were divided. Half our team pushed forward to make the pre-move better, while the other half was looking elsewhere.

It was in looking at the whole customer journey that creative and planning agreed to refocus the outcome of the brief towards something that appealed to consumers during their excited phase. We realized at this moment

that the boxes could offer a greater purpose – for both the consumer and for IKEA as an innovative media vehicle. After all, this is where IKEA's purpose plays a more important role in their lives. IKEA offers stylish, affordable furnishings and home décor to make your new home just the way you like it. We assembled this into a strategic POV that stressed the importance of looking beyond our boxes campaign to help it reach a newfound potential. We received nothing but support from IKEA to explore it further.




## *Exploration started with identifying a consumer problem...*

We know that moving to a new place meant they had to rethink their décor and furnishings and how they could optimize the space. It's frustrating, because they've already been through what they thought was the worst of their move and want nothing other than to get settled.

It starts with finding a place for old furniture, which in and of itself can be an onerous task, dragging heavy items from side-to-side in their apartment. Next, they start to notice gaps in their layout and pieces that just aren't fitting in. It's at this moment where they really need inspiration.

They go searching for ways to make their new home feel like home as soon as possible.





*It's in this problem we found the insight that, in life, seeing is believing when it comes to choosing furniture*

Taking measurements is too time-consuming and no matter how many times you check, you end up feeling unsure. What if you get your width wrong and order the wrong-sized furniture? The other side is purely cosmetic – are the colours right? Textures? Handles? It's very difficult to imagine a 2D static image in the context of your actual apartment. There's also the added struggle of logistics such as no Wi-Fi access (for online research) or no car to travel from store-to-store looking at physical pieces of furniture. This realization of the physical and tangible versus a digital experience for the consumer helped us stay focused as we built our idea. We realized that by helping the anxious urbanite to SEE the possibilities of their new space, IKEA would demonstrate to Montrealers that a move organized by IKEA is a move made better.



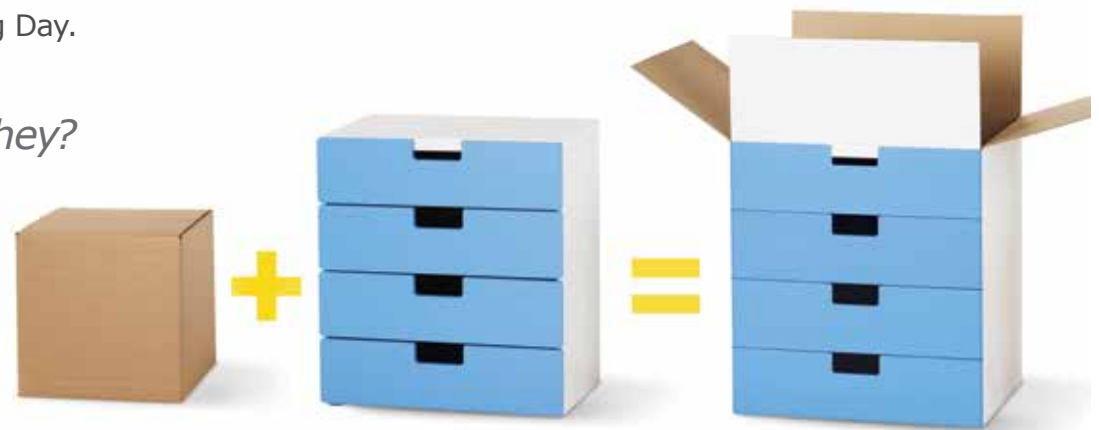


*So, we looked again at the utility of our boxes...*

Moving boxes are boring. They're usually brown, they sometimes give you a paper cut, and you send them to the curb when your stuff is removed. In fact, they probably feel more like a burden, once you have them stacked in the corner of your new apartment.

They also hold your things, while you move or stow them away. They come in different shapes and sizes. They're sturdy, lightweight, and stackable. They're absolutely in demand across Montreal every July 1st on Moving Day.

*They really aren't inspirational...are they?*





## *Introducing the IKEA "Inspiration Boxes"*

In 2014, our insight drove the transformation of functional moving boxes into boxes of inspiration – our boxes would become actual-size replicas of IKEA furnishings.





For the first time, Montrealers were given a way to test drive IKEA products at home. We found a brand new media vehicle to communicate with consumers when they were most receptive to it. IKEA products including the MALM nightstand, STUVA storage combination and MICKE drawer unit were created out of moving boxes that matched the exact size and colour of the real thing. Not only did they give perspective on how good they look in your apartment but also a sense of scale.

Inspiration to buy the real thing was right there, in her home, seeding the idea that they need to buy the real thing. The end goal? Drive them in-store, of course...

The boxes included the following message to inspire and encourage their visit to IKEA:

"It's not just a Moving Day Box, it's inspiration. Use this box to help you move. Then use it to help you see what a stylish (the IKEA storage product) can bring to your home. Once you find the perfect spot for it, come to IKEA for the real thing and find the other home furnishing you'll need to make the most of your new space."



*Without budget for media, we had to make sure people could find us.*

Over the Canada Day long weekend Montrealers were on the move (literally). To reach these people during their last minute preparations, a freestanding pop-up board was constructed in a downtown location where people could easily claim their boxes of inspiration. People could take 1 size or one of each. It was up to them!

In addition to providing utility and inspiration for movers, the installment got massive exposure as it was located on the very popular shopping corridor of St. Catherine's street just steps away from the main entrance of a Jazz Festival.

# The result:

## Another significant increase in sales and store traffic vs. the previous year.

By recognizing the inspiration needs implicit in the moving journey and not just the functional need of a moving box, great planning took a successful past program to new heights and redefined the value of out-of-home advertising in the process.

The "Inspiration Boxes" contributed to a highly successful Moving Day period. The 2014 Moving Day saw a

16% increase in store visitors and a 6% increase in sales versus the previous year. Proving again that IKEA understands its consumers and is able to provide even greater purpose beyond purchase, further cementing IKEA's position as the city's favorite home furnishings helper.

