Together Commercial: Nike & Lebron James

By: John Cirillo, Michaela Ramicone, Maddie McDonnell, and Brigid Dwyer
Audience

- All demographics
- Cleveland, Ohio
- Cleveland Cavalier Fans
- Sports Fans
- Nike Fans
- General Public Watching the Advertisement
Genre

- Celebrity Endorsement - Lebron James
  - Other Cavs Players (Kyrie Irving, Tristan Thompson)
  - Coach Dru Joyce
  - Gloria Marie James (Lebron’s Mom)
Community unity is the goal in the commercial
Message: Together. One City. One goal.
Lebron’s team captain speech before game time become contagious throughout the city of Cleveland.
  - Young and old, rich and poor alike all converge in what can only be seen as a healing huddle where Lebron inspires not only his teammates, but the city to all work hard and together.
Arrangement of Ad

- Celebrates the pride and emotion felt around the city of Cleveland.
- Use of black and white, instrumental music, Lebron's speech all have a certain heaviness and shadow too them. (Give off pride and emotion)
- Shows excitement in Cleveland after hard times
- Everyone is coming together as one and working together to build up Cleveland to be a strong, hard-working and great city.
Strategies to Ad

- Focused on emotional appeal
  - Return of Lebron James to Cleveland
  - Inspirational instrumental music
  - Speech from Lebron James focused on inspiring players and building up the city of Cleveland
  - Black and white vs. color - puts more focus on the message and helps emphasize emotion. Throwback to the past - Cleveland is on the uprise from its shadowed, gritty past.
  - Incorporating Cleveland fans from all walks of life
Strategies to Ad

- Limited product placement of Nike
  - (Lebron’s shoes and ending of commercial)
- Uses close up and far away shots - shows emotion/show many people in Cleveland are coming together to “Word hard, together”
- Building positive brand image for Nike - not pushing products for consumers to buy
- Result of message:
  - Inspiration
  - Associate Nike brand with togetherness and accomplishment
Representation

- Lebron James - He is helping to bring clevelanders, from near and far, together with a sport (basketball)
- Coach Dru Joyce - helping to bring the city together
- The people of Cleveland - We may all look different, but we all have one goal for our city
Assumptions the Ad Makes

- The factors, color, music and people create a message that anything can be done if done together.
- This advertisement produces the assumption that through hard work and working together you can overcome the odds.
- This is a theme that Nike strives to portray.
- Nike shows that people don’t buy what they produce, they buy **why** they produce them, and they are about authentic, athletic performance.
- The ad makes the assumption that if you buy the Nike product you are doing it for the love of sports and the love of something you are passionate about.
Assumptions the Ad Makes Cont.

- **RACE**
  - The basketball players are predominantly African American, however, the advertisement shows all races.
  - It helps to portray that anyone can wear the Nike brand and be successful, you do not have to be a certain race or ethnicity.
  - This challenges the stereotypes of racial identity. Let’s it be known that for anyone, anywhere, anything is possible. You do not have to be African American, White, Latino, etc. to be successful.

- **CLASS**
  - Clips of poor areas of Cleveland are shown, however it still shows individuals raising their fists for strength and togetherness that they can overcome their struggles and do great things.
  - Makes the assumption that wealthy or poor, you have your struggles but with the support of others you will surpass them.
The Message the Ad Sends

- Hands going up in unison showcase the Togetherness of the entire advertisement.
- This advertisement focuses on Cleveland and performing “Hard work, Together.”
  - As noted, the Nike brand is not mentioned nor viewed many times but the concept of “JUST DO IT” and doing it for your city and for your love/passion of something is what can get you far.
  - Nike’s aim is for people to buy their product based on the message they are sending through this advertisement, rather than the strength, durability and positive attributes of the shoe itself.
- The advertisement is about basketball, it is about Lebron James, it is about Nike, but it is more importantly about working hard for a city.
  - Carrying people on your back so that they can see how great life is. Bring people together to celebrate something in common.
The Message the Ad Sends

● Consequences of the messages identified
  ○ Long-Term: Working hard will eventually pay off, you can work to succeed.

● The message creates realistic but also unrealistic expectations for people.
  ○ Realistic: Through unity and passion about a particular subject or hobby you can excel.
  ○ Unrealistic: The advertisement focuses on how together and united Cleveland is, shows a large support of people coming together in alleyways and side streets, however people have their differences in the city. Not everyone shows full support 24/7.

● The advertisement shows how one can be both a citizen and a consumer, how you can live in Cleveland and come together and unify your city while also wearing Nike as a way of supporting the motto - “Just Do It”
Relationships to Audience

- The commercial includes all demographics of individuals.
  - The use of black and white was a way to block out all of the colors of what everyone was wearing and make people feel more united as one - “Together”
  - The black and white adds to the realness and grittiness of Cleveland, Ohio.
  - Black and white was effective in serving as a visual homage to the depression era art about the common person - made it relatable for individuals of Cleveland, Ohio watching the advertisement.

- If you are a Cavaliers fan, basketball fan, or just a fan of emotionally manipulative Nike advertisements this tugs on the heartstrings.
For sports lovers and athletes this has a strong appeal.
- But, it also reaches out and inspires the masses.
- Shows that with passion for a sport, your city, your people, etc. you can accomplish anything. This appeals to many people because many people relate to the fact that they can be passionate about something and do it not for money, but for love.

Drives the audience to visit the city of Cleveland.
- Many references to Cleveland. Shows the love that the city withholds.
- “We gotta do it for Cleveland, they are waiting on us.”
- “We owe them. They going to support us. But we gotta give it back to them.”
- “The toughness that we have on the court is going to come from this city. Everybody. The whole city of Cleveland.”
Consequences of the Ad

- It did not directly sell the product - maybe Nike spent too much?
  - Not a lot of Nike products in the commercial nor the durability & performance of products
- Too much focus on Lebron and not the rest of the team
  - The team is made up of 15 players & the team is what wins - not just Lebron
- Too melodramatic
  - Too emotional for a commercial, Lebron is too inspirational almost to a point of fakeness
How the Ad Forms Conclusions

- Nike’s motto: JUST DO IT
  - Come together
  - Be supportive
  - Build each other up
  - Unity

- Deductive: Predicts that unity, coming together, and “just doing it” will seek out positive benefits.

- Inductive: Uses Nike’s motto as a way to inspire people that their product can help you realize that coming together with individuals who support you will lead to success.
Conclusions

● “Hard work. Together.”
● Nike is showing that Lebron James and the city of Cleveland will work hard, supporting each other, coming together and focusing on how this will lead to success.
● Do things with passion and with love.
● Nike wants to sell their product to you not about what it is capable of doing but why they are a good company and the issues that they support.