

meet the locals

Introducing the Aquarium of Niagara's Historic Expansion Through
the Animals that Call the Region Home



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about the aquarium of niagara

- Opened in 1965
- Located just steps outside of Niagara Falls State Park
- Nonprofit organization
- Annual attendance: 200,000
- FTE employees: ~50
- Operating budget at the time of this project: \$5 million



about great lakes 360

- First expansion in the Aquarium's nearly 60-year history
- Second building located 500 feet away from the Aquarium's historic building
- 16 living exhibits featuring animals found in Great Lakes ecosystems
- Located on New York State Park property – developed in direct partnership with Parks



strategic challenges

- Position Great Lakes 360 as a meaningful addition to one of the world's most iconic natural destinations—Niagara Falls.
- Introduce Great Lakes 360 to two distinct audiences:
 - Western New York residents
 - Seasonal tourists



goals & objectives

1. Drive traffic to the Aquarium's campus during a high-stakes attendance window.
 - Increase summer attendance (July–September) by 4% YOY
2. Increase awareness around the Aquarium's historic expansion, Great Lakes 360 and its significance within the broader Niagara Falls experience.
 - Boost QR code engagement on in-park A-frame signage by 10%
 - Generate 50,000 pageviews on the Great Lakes 360 landing page
 - Exceed benchmark KPIs for digital advertising

big idea & creative strategy

Big Idea:
Local Wildlife, Personally Experienced

Strategy:

- Position the animals at Great Lakes 360 as individual beings, not abstract concepts
- Facilitate personal, one-on-one connections between animals and guests (active experience vs passive observation)



big idea & creative strategy



big idea & creative strategy

Big Idea:
Local Wildlife, Personally Experienced

Why it Works:

Cultivates WNY Pride Among Residents

- Message: Great Lakes animals are Western New Yorkers, too! They are part of our story, found in our lakes, streams, and backyards.

big idea & creative strategy



Courtesy: Niagara Falls USA

big idea & creative strategy

Big Idea:
Local Wildlife, Personally Experienced

Why it Works:

Captivates Tourists Seeking Authentic Experiences

- Message: Great Lakes animals are integral to the region you came to explore – experience them in an entertaining and informative way.



creative execution



Two versions of a frog named "Carl" from the "meet the locals" campaign. The top image shows a close-up of the frog with a "Hello my name is" tag. The bottom image shows the frog in an aquarium tank with a young girl smiling in the background. The text "meet the locals" and "at great lakes 360" are overlaid on the images. The "I ❤️ NY" logo is in the top right corner.

great lakes 360 at aquarium of niagara

visit today

I ❤️ NY

Three images of a fish named "Pearl" from the "meet the locals" campaign. The first two images are close-ups of the fish with a "Hello my name is" tag. The third image shows a young girl looking at the fish in an aquarium. The text "meet the locals" and "at great lakes 360" are overlaid on the images. The "I ❤️ NY" logo is in the bottom right corner.

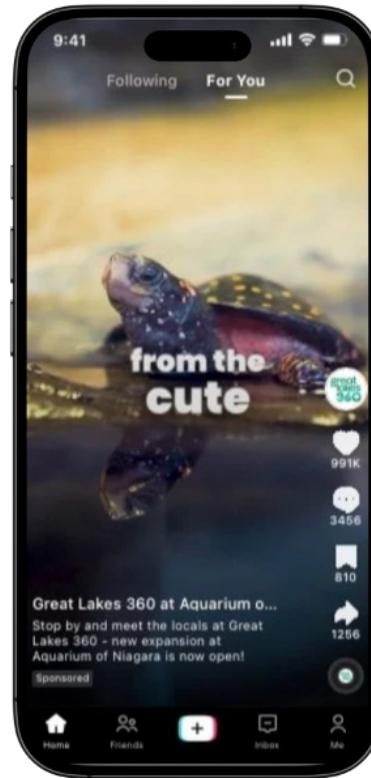
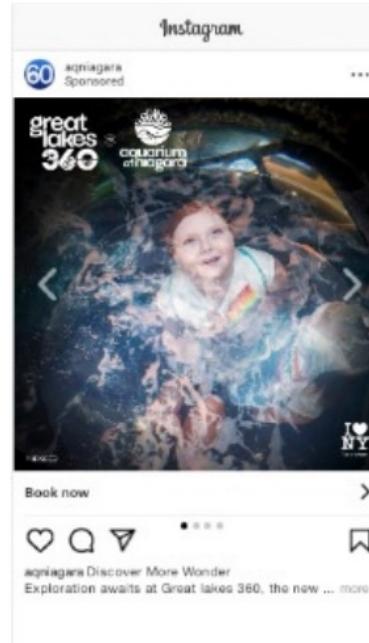
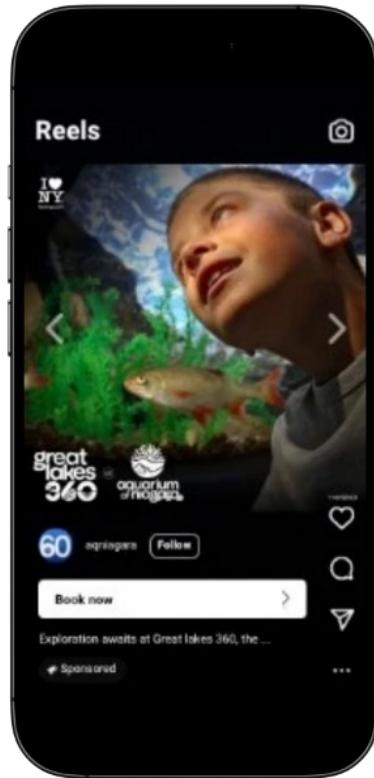
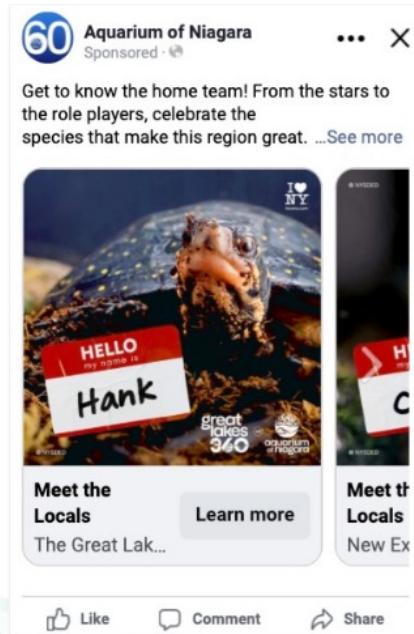
great lakes 360 at aquarium of niagara

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creative execution



creative execution



Open on close-up of frog's eyes, nature sounds ambient in background, environment is vague



Cut to close-up of little girl's eyes



Cut back to frog, medium-wide shot revealing full frog



Cut back to girl, medium-wide shot, revealing her full face and smile



Cut to side view show girl is smiling at a frog just 10-15 inches away—camera pulls back to reveal we are actually indoors at GL360, and she is viewing the frog in an exhibit.



AVO: What makes any place special...are those who call it home.
a few quick semi-close-up shots of some key creatures/exhibits of GL360 (ex: sturgeon touch tank, sport fish tank, etc.)



From cute and charismatic
close-up of "cute" creature, ex: salamander, frog, pumpkinseed fish, emerald shiners



to wacky, weird, and wonderful—
close-up of people at tank of "interesting looking" creature(s), ex: sea lamprey, praying mantis



—there's a whole bunch of fascinating characters waiting to say "hi" at Great Lakes 360—
will be shot of child popping up into "bubble" underneath sport fish tank



a new addition to the Aquarium of Niagara.
wide shot of sturgeon touch tank area with surrounding nature visible in background



great lakes 360 at aquarium of niagara
aquariumofniagara.org
So stop by, and meet the locals.
close-up of turtles looking at camera with family out of focus smiling in background, OR a child smiling through the tank at them

creative execution



[music and frog ribbits]

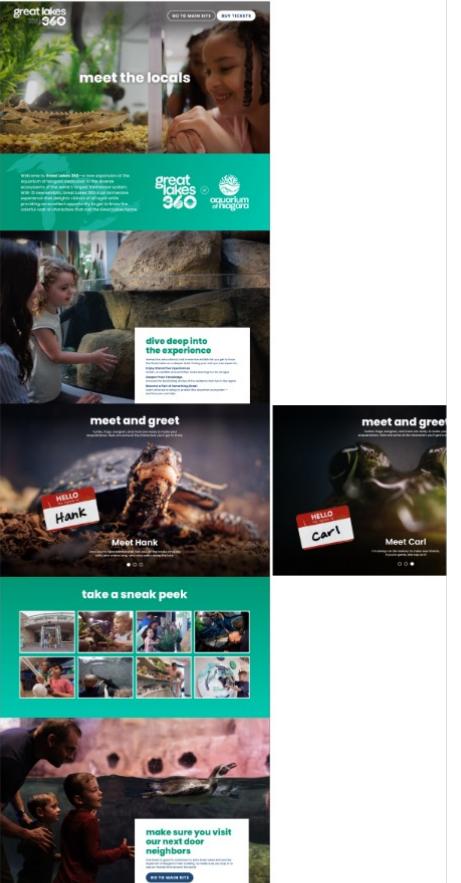
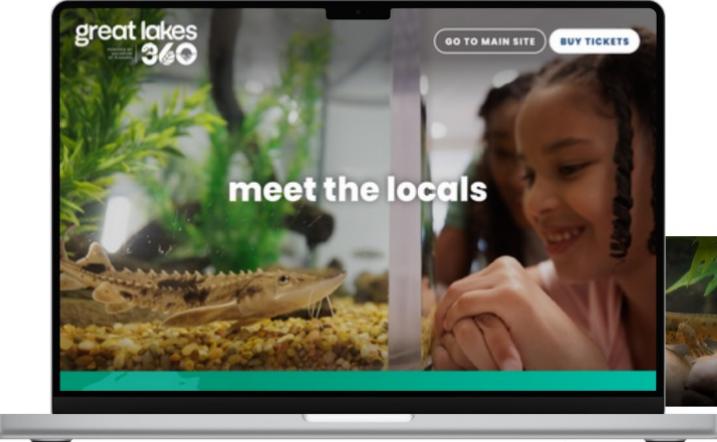
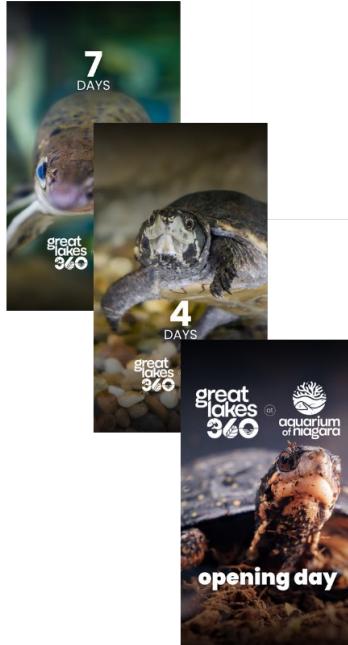
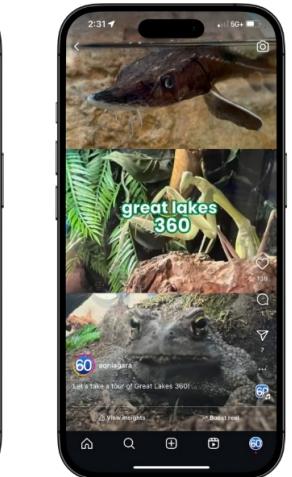
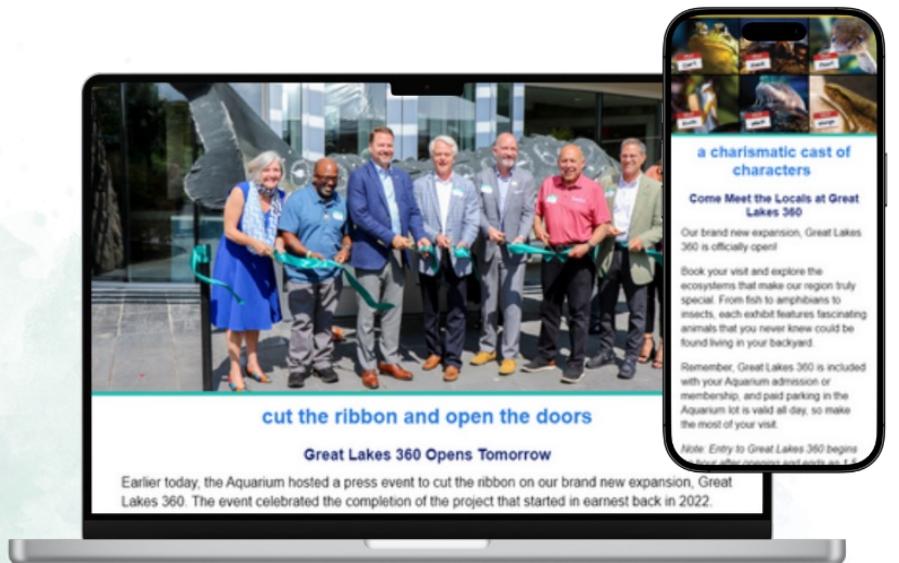
media strategy - paid

- Out of Home
 - State Park A-Frames
 - Billboards
 - Airport
- Broadcast
 - Linear TV
 - CTV/OTT
 - PBS
- Digital
 - Display
 - Social Media
- Guerilla
 - Posters in local businesses
 - Coffee sleeves at local cafes
 - “Chalking” on park trails



media strategy - owned

- Landing page and custom domain
- Aquarium email newsletter
- Organic social media posts



media strategy - earned

- \$34,000 in PR value
- 1.18 million impressions
- Coverage across four linear TV networks and two radio stations



WKBW

Aquarium of Niagara expansion gives visitors hands-on experience with animals from the Great Lakes region

Great Lakes 360 is a new expansion at the Aquarium of Niagara dedicated to the diverse ecosystems of the world's largest freshwater system.



'It's a pretty exciting time': Great Lakes 360 exhibit opens at Aquarium of Niagara

An indispensable Niagara Falls attraction is getting the attention and upgrades it deserves...



timeline

March 2024	April 2024	June 1st	June 19th	June 19-30th	July 1st	July 12th	July 12th	July 13th
 Develop creative campaign concepts	 Create marketing plan & identify media mix	 Receive COO/ DEC Permits	 Facilitate photo/video shoot	 Produce creative assets	 Activate teaser campaign	 Host press event/ soft opening	 Activate full marketing campaign & PR strategy	 Public Opening

results

Objective	Goal	Actual
Increase attendance over PY	4%	11%
Drive visits to the campaign landing page	50,000 pageviews	62,000 pageviews
Boost QR code scans of in-park signage	10% increase	70% increase
Exceed benchmark digital ad performance	Industry benchmarks: • Digital Display (CTR) - 0.31% • YouTube (VCR) – 90% • Meta (CPC) - \$0.76	Actual: • 0.34% CTR • 96.88% VCR • \$0.37 CPC

Platform	Page Visits	New Followers
Facebook	Up 61%	665
Instagram	Up 91%	449

thank you!



Get in Touch

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