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Contact: Daniella Delgado
(866) 571-3449
Daniella@inklinkmarketing.com

Innovation, Community Engagement Highlighted at SXSW 2017 Brand Innovators Conference

Church's Chicken® Shares Valuable Insights From "Church's Loves Communities" Web Series

AUSTIN, TX – At this year's SXSW Conference, a new spin on grass-roots marketing was highlighted as an innovative solution to digital engagement. Presented by [Church's Chicken](#) on March 11, 2017, the Brand Innovators event featured the popular international fried chicken restaurant chain's "Church's Loves Communities" web campaign – and how it is driving traffic, increased guest satisfaction, and loyalty for the brand, which celebrates 65 years of community connections this year.

"Today, it's easy for brands to get caught up in the data side of digital marketing," said Laura Reese, Director of Media & Digital for Church's, and presenter at this year's SXSW event. "At the end of the day, however, we all need to remember that it's people at the end of this communication chain. If your digital strategy isn't aimed at real human beings and real human experiences, then you're missing an important element."

The guest-centric approach that Reese mentioned was a key component to developing Church's digital strategy, which focused on identifying the brand archetypes central to the Church's brand experience. By tying the archetypes to the emotions and sensory feelings people associate with the brand's product, Reese and her team developed content that authentically connected to audiences.

"Food is at the center of the brand experience," Reese shared, "and that is more meaningful than people may think. Food nurtures. Food welcomes. Food celebrates. And especially for Church's, food *connects*. That's what we wanted to showcase with *Church's Loves Communities*."

Filmed with the cooperation of agency partners in multiple cities, *Church's Loves Communities* pays homage to the cities, people, and moments that have contributed to Church's rich and diverse heritage. Montages of real citizens, employees, and community leaders were created for San Antonio, TX where the brand first began; as well for Compton, CA, and St. Louis, MO. A fourth video for Atlanta, GA, will be released in spring of 2017, with more cities planned for the rest of the year. All videos were launched with short promotional clips circulated on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. Full 5 to 7-minute long videos were hosted on Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter – with the Compton video even being live tweeted during the 2016 Grammy Awards.

Videos for the *Church's Loves Communities* series can be found at YouTube.com.

- Compton, CA - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PuuVOiJmiyA>
- San Antonio, TX – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HOatze8-XMw>
- St. Louis, MO - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c9Dc3hO83po>

“On the St. Louis video, we received more than 3 million impressions and 1 million views – for that one video alone. But it was the sentiment that was the most important takeaway here,” Reese said. “Comments and feedback showed us that this message was striking a really positive chord with our audience. We were delivering on a 65-year-long story of authenticity and connection to the communities we serve. This message continues to inspire our internal teams to honor that heritage with continued excellence – in the kitchen, with guests, with fellow employees, and with the greater community at large. *That’s* a result that truly matters...a result with true staying power in our fast-paced digital realm and one we plan to continue to leverage as part of our ongoing strategy.”

About Church's Chicken®

Founded in San Antonio, TX in 1952 by George W. Church, *Church's Chicken*® is one of the largest quick service restaurant chicken chains in the world. *Church's*® specializes in Original and Spicy Chicken freshly prepared throughout the day in small batches that are hand-battered and double-breaded, *Tender Strips*®, sandwiches, honey-butter biscuits made from scratch and freshly baked, and classic, home-style sides all for a great value. *Church's*® (along with its sister brand *Texas Chicken*® outside the Americas) has more than 1,600 locations in 27 countries and international territories and system-wide sales of more than \$1 billion. For more information, visit www.churchs.com. Follow *Church's*® on Facebook at www.facebook.com/churchschicken and Twitter at www.twitter.com/churchschicken.

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Headquarters: 980 Hammond Drive, Suite 1100 Atlanta, GA 30328 (770)-350-3843