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adidas Puts Its 'Spin' on Soccer With Mobile Design

Product: adidas Major League Soccer jerseys

Number of displays: 155

P-O-P company: Rapid Displays, Chicago and Union City, Calif.

Introduction: May 2005

Duration: Seasonal

Construction: Sintra

Display set-up: Retail staff

In its first year of a 10-year partnership with Major League Soccer (MLS), **adidas**, Portland, Ore., created a battery-operated, rotating mobile to promote sales of MLS jerseys in soccer specialty stores, team stores and similar outlets. The campaign coincides with the MLS season. Mobiles shipped in May and will be on display through November.

adidas currently sponsors nine MLS teams. Beginning next year, adidas will sponsor all 12 teams as the league's exclusive licensed-product supplier. Molly Cleveland, soccer brand communication manager, says, "The partnership incorporates every aspect of the game, from product creation to grassroots, television rights and retail distribution." An introductory advertising campaign features a series of television spots called "Night Practice."

Rapid Displays, Chicago and Union City, Calif., produced the mobiles and a matching window banner. Rapid Displays made sure the mobile had balance, which required precise die-cutting, and that the unit was light enough to rotate and not constantly consume batteries. The display stretches battery life for six weeks. Additionally, Rapid Displays created flexible, easy-to-assemble flat pieces to reduce the cost of shipping. Each mobile uses one "D" cell battery. The lightweight mobiles

were distributed to stores in the markets of the nine featured soccer teams, with greater quantities going to the larger markets.

The top piece of the mobile is a rotating disk displaying screened logos of the nine sponsored teams, with the adidas logo centered between the Eastern Conference and Western Conference logos. The disk is 22 inches in diameter. The display consists of Sintra as the primary construction material,

because the foamy plastic is light, versatile and sufficiently durable, Cleveland says.

The customizable bottom piece is triangular with pop-off panels on each side. One side has a picture of the local team jersey, and one features the team logo. The third side displays the adidas and MLS logos. The adidas logo is also embroidered on the jerseys and is visible in the jersey image, further emphasizing the joint marketing approach.

Some stores have racks dedicated to the MLS jerseys, which are identical to the ones worn by the players, Cleveland says. Other stores hung their mobiles in an appropriate area to attract customers to the jerseys. Cleveland says retailers especially like the versatility of the display.

"adidas is the largest sponsor of soccer," according to Cleveland, "with a greater than 50% market share." This campaign is helping the company strengthen its position. ■



This battery-powered rotating mobile visually demonstrates the adidas partnership with Major League Soccer. The shoe company is the largest sponsor of the sport.