

Voodoo Doughnuts Media Outreach Strategy

Nashville (The Gulch) Location
Grand Opening - \$150,000 Budget
September 1st, 2024 - August 31st, 2025
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Executive Summary

This media plan outlines the strategic launch of Voodoo Doughnut's newest store in the Gulch neighborhood of Nashville, Tennessee. With a campaign period running from September 1, 2024, to August 31, 2025, and a total media budget of \$150,000, our goal is to generate awareness, drive foot traffic, foster loyalty, and cultivate long-term brand advocacy for Voodoo in a new and culturally vibrant market. The communications platform positions Voodoo as more than just a food brand; it's an immersive, shareable experience that becomes an integral part of the consumer's lifestyle.

Our target audience is 18 to 34-year-olds in the Nashville DMA: social-savvy young adults, students, night owls, and festival-goers. These consumers value authenticity, irreverence, and novelty, all of which Voodoo embodies. Media tactics have been chosen to reflect their behaviors across digital, physical, and cultural touchpoints. These include TikTok and Instagram Reels for awareness and storytelling, geo-targeted digital display and SEM for mobile ordering and search conversion, OOH to build local buzz, streaming audio for contextual engagement, and influencer/event sponsorships to drive earned media and social UGC.

We structured our objectives using a DISCOVERY–INVOLVEMENT–ACTION–SHARE framework. Our campaign KPIs include reaching 60%-70% of our audience with at least four exposures, driving a 50% spike in website traffic (with 75% from Nashville), generating 250+ attendees at the grand opening, achieving 500 redemptions through referral promotions, and collecting over 300 positive online reviews. These goals will be measured using Nielsen metrics, Google Analytics, loyalty app data, social insights, and platform-specific performance reports.

Our continuity strategy uses pulsing and flighting, with heavy investment in October (grand opening), a holiday push through December, and a second wave in spring focused on merchandise and catering. The media flowchart is carefully constructed to align key tactics with Voodoo's promotional needs and consumer habits throughout the year. Of the \$150,000 budget, 90% is allocated to paid and owned media, while 10% is reserved for earned activations such as events and influencers.

Ultimately, this plan is designed to make Voodoo Doughnut a Nashville favorite, from the very first pink box to years of repeat visits. Our strategy is efficient, targeted, and infused with the same bold creativity that defines the Voodoo brand. We believe this campaign will deliver on launch goals, drive customer loyalty, and build a lasting relationship between Voodoo and its newest city. Voodoo does much more than food, and by capturing this valuable brand, we can develop a successful location and hopefully many more.

Voodoo Doughnut Situation Analysis

Campaign Scope

Voodoo Doughnut is preparing to launch a new franchise location in the Gulch district of Nashville, TN, with a campaign period spanning September 1, 2024, to August 31, 2025. The goal of this media communication plan is to raise brand awareness, drive physical traffic to the new store, and establish long-term customer loyalty. The campaign will support many aspects: Discovery, Involvement, Action, and Share, each with specific KPIs tied to media exposure, website traffic, event attendance, loyalty program engagement, and user-generated content. With a \$150,000 budget, the plan must effectively utilize paid, owned, and earned media while also accounting for local influencers, community events, and referral programs.

Brand Insights

Voodoo Doughnut is a quirky, community-driven doughnut brand founded in Portland, Oregon, in 2000 by Kenneth “Cat Daddy” Pogson and Tres Shannon (Voodoo Doughnut, n.d.). Known for their electric atmosphere and offbeat, yet delicious menu items, the brand has carved a niche among food lovers who crave both novelty and quality. This environment also fosters amazing service, which is recognised by customers. Applesaucy102 on TikTok remarked that the employee who served her was “amazing” and that she could have talked to her “all day” (TikTok, 2024). This quality of service is not an exception, but an expectation for customers going to Voodoo. In fact, many customers share similar experiences at Voodoo online. The brand champions values such as weirdness, inclusion, humor, and creativity, traits that have fueled their following across 24 locations in eight states.

Brand assessment reveals a strong emotional connection with consumers, built on the promise of offering “an experience, not just a treat” (Voodoo Doughnut, n.d.). However, as the brand expands, especially into new regions like Nashville, it must balance its authentic Portland roots with local cultural adaptation. The brand’s truth lies in providing not just doughnuts, but moments of joy that feel personal and unexpected, an insight that should anchor all messaging and touchpoints.

Competitive Insights

Nashville’s gourmet dessert scene is competitive, featuring both national chains and beloved local options. Many of these brands compete on freshness, visual appeal, or health-oriented options, while Voodoo stands out via theatrical branding, unique recipes, and a lifestyle angle. Examples in the area include “The Baked Bear,” a National ice cream and cookie chain, as well as “Five Daughters Bakery,” a more local chain (The Baked Bear, n.d.; Five Daughters Bakery, n.d). These competitors may have delicious baked goods, but their brand presence is far from Voodoo’s.

Voodoo Doughnut is best positioned as a “destination brand” in the Competitive Matrix, more than just a food option; it’s an Instagrammable, word-of-mouth-worthy experience. The brand is built around virality and earned marketing, which is their strongest suit. This edge must be strategically used to capture attention quickly and build local relevance before competitors saturate the market further.

Target Market Insights

Our proposed brand community is the “Experience Enthusiasts”, younger Millennials and Gen Z consumers in the 18-34 age range who live in or frequently visit Nashville's urban core. From a Nashville DMA population of around 2 million, our primary audience, accounting for age and location, is around 170,000 (US DoC, n.d.; Statistical Atlas, n.d.). This audience is highly active on social media, values authenticity, and is constantly on the lookout for new local experiences to share (Mintel, 2024). Voodoo is a one-time experience for many, but the goal is to make it so much more. By highlighting the expansive, shifting menu, we can bring passionate fans back more and more.

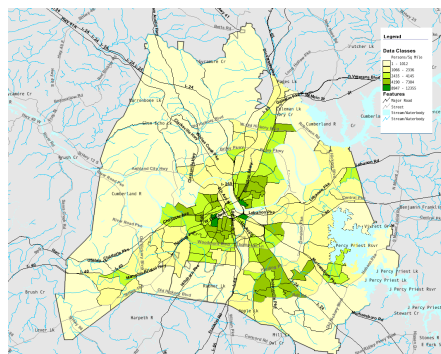
Geographic Insights

Nashville is a booming metro with strong tourism, a young, creative population, and a rising food scene. The city blends Southern heritage with modern trends, making it ideal for brands that bridge comfort and novelty. Brands like Crumbl have harnessed a newfound craze for massive, sugary treats throughout the US, and Voodoo can harness that within Nashville.

The Gulch is a trendy, walkable neighborhood popular with urban professionals, tourists, and influencers. Proximity to nightlife and boutique hotels makes it a high-traffic area, not to mention the densely populated residential areas shown below on the population heat map. Geo-targeted ads, local partnerships, and pop-ups can amplify brand presence here. Foot traffic will be consistent throughout the nights, filling Voodoo up till closing.

Customer Empathy Map

<p>Says Plans, Fun with Fiends, Talks about Nights Out and “Experiential” Locations</p>	<p>Thinks Self-Fulfillment, Over-Indulgence, Influencer Opinions, Cravings, Calorie-Conscious</p>
<p>Feels Cravings, Sugar-First, Taste, Service, Comfort Food, Relationships</p>	<p>Does Bubbly Attitude, Impulse Destinations, Drives, Nightlife, Outside</p>



Media Communication

For the launch of Voodoo Doughnut’s new store in the Gulch district of Nashville, Tennessee, our media communication plan aims to build brand awareness, engage local consumers, drive in-store action, and inspire ongoing brand advocacy. The campaign will span from September 1, 2024, to August 31, 2025, with the grand opening occurring on October 31. The total media budget is \$150,000, with 90% allocated to paid and owned media, and 10% allocated to event marketing and influencer partnerships. Our objective is to create a media ecosystem that reflects Voodoo’s irreverent personality while achieving clear, measurable goals aligned with the brand’s long-term ambitions.

Objective Type	Specific Objective	KPI / Metric	Timing Pattern
Discovery	Reach 60%-70% of the target audience (ages 18–34 in Nashville DMA) with 4+ ad exposures	Nielsen reach/frequency, GRPs	Pulsing (Sept–Oct, Jan–March)
Involvement	Increase website and social media visits during launch; 75% of visits from the Nashville DMA	Google Analytics, referral data	Flighted (Oct 1 – Nov 15)
Action	Attract 250+ attendees to the grand opening on October 31, 2024	In-store traffic counters, POS data	Launch spike (Oct 31)
Action	Establish baseline sales in merchandise and catering for future growth	Shopify sales data, event order invoices	Flighted (Jan – Aug 2025)
Share	Generate 300+ positive reviews on Google/Yelp; offer a free donut per verified review	Review counts, timestamp tracking	Always-on
Share	Achieve 500 redemptions of 20% off referral codes for new visitors	Referral code usage reports	Continuous (Nov – Aug)

Communication Platform

Our communication platform centers on three core truths. The brand truth is that Voodoo Doughnut is more than a doughnut shop; it's an over-the-top, pink-boxed, deliciously weird experience. The truth is that Gen Z and younger millennials crave experiences they can share online and remember offline. The cultural truth is that food has become an expression of identity, and Voodoo allows people to express individuality through outrageous flavors, community events, and irreverent humor. We want to match this with our outbound media. The big idea: The more different and weird, the better. The big idea for our campaign is simply to stick out. If we send basic PR boxes, run boring ads, and orchestrate lame events, Voodoo will never get the attention it deserves. From this idea, our strategic center will revolve around differentiation and being unique in the media mix shared by competitors (eMarketer, 2024). In addition, to bring everything together, we will connect our messaging with the famous Voodoo pink. Think Pinkout!

Strategically, we are targeting 18 to 34-year-old "Urban Creatives" in the Nashville DMA. This group includes college students, young professionals, artists, musicians, and social media power users. They are highly responsive to experiential brands, frequently attend local events, and are active on TikTok, Instagram, and Snapchat (Adweek, 2024). Through earned media, they will do much of the work for us. Our geographic focus includes The Gulch, Midtown, Downtown, and the areas around Belmont and Vanderbilt University, where most of our target market is located (Statistical Atlas, n.d.). Our mindset strategy is "making it out of the groupchat," meaning we will meet people where they scroll (on social and mobile), inspire outings with friends, and make the experience worthy of late nights, hangover mornings, and event days. Paid media will lead awareness and action, earned media will spark credibility and community involvement, and owned media will reinforce the brand's playful voice.

My recommended media mix includes social media (Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat) as the lead for brand voice, storytelling, and engagement. We will use geotargeted digital display and retargeting ads through Google and programmatic partners to boost mobile ordering and reinforce launch messaging. SEM will be used for high-intent local searches like "treats near me" and "open late food Nashville." OOH will play a major role with murals, digital billboards, and wild postings near nightlife areas and campuses in October and December. Audio on Spotify and Pandora will capture attention during drive time and weekend chill hours, using humor and sound branding. Lastly, we will invest a portion of our non-paid budget on influencer activations and co-branded sponsorships at local events such as food truck festivals, tattoo expos, and college street fairs, particularly in spring and early summer. We will also use this money to pay influencers to come and make content at one of a few soft opening events.

Together, this integrated plan aligns every dollar to a measurable goal while keeping Voodoo's unique energy at the center. From late-night TikToks to pink-box murals and cult-like loyalty, every tactic helps turn curious passersby into loyal, loud fans. The campaign not only supports a successful Nashville launch but sets the foundation for Voodoo Doughnut's continued brand expansion and long-term media strategy.

KPIs by Media Channel

Media Tactic	Purpose	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)
TikTok + Instagram Reels Ads	Brand awareness + social sharing	4M impressions, 3% engagement rate, 25% video completion rate
Digital Display (Geo-targeted)	Conversion + proximity targeting	2% CTR, 1,500 online ordering conversions
SEM (Google Search Ads)	High-intent traffic + discovery	6% CTR on branded keywords, CPC under \$2.00
OOH (Billboards, Murals)	Local buzz + store awareness	60% reach, 4x frequency within a 5-mile radius
Streaming Audio (Spotify)	Commute/lifestyle connection	750,000 impressions, 25% audio completion rate
Event Sponsorships + Influencers	Cultural relevance + earned media	3 partnerships, 100+ UGC posts, 500K combined reach
Yelp/Google Review Promo	Advocacy + positive sentiment	300 reviews, average 4.5+ rating, 150 donut reward redemptions
Referral Code Promo	New user growth	1000 redemptions, tracked via POS codes

Budget Recap

Total Budget: \$150,000

Media Allocation:

- Paid/Owned Media (90%) = \$135,000
- Earned Media, Events, Influencers (10%) = \$15,000

Month	Focus	Media Emphasis	Spend
Sept 2024	Pre-launch hype	Social, Display, Spotify	\$15,000
Oct 2024	Grand opening + Halloween	All channels active	\$35,000
Nov–Dec 2024	Holiday push + loyalty	SEM, Spotify, Re-engagement ads	\$20,000
Jan–March 2025	Merch/Catering campaigns	Streaming, OOH refresh, Geo-display	\$20,000
Apr–May 2025	Campus + event sponsorships	Influencer activations, TikTok/Snap	\$20,000

June–Aug 2025	Sustain buzz + reviews/referrals	Social + earned + promo refresh	\$25,000
TOTAL			\$135,000

Influencer/Event Budget

Sept-Oct 2024	Invite Only Soft Openings + PR	Influencer Targeted, Local Focus	\$7,000
October 2024	Grand Opening Party	Food Partner, Live Music, Free Merch	\$8,000
TOTAL			\$15,000

Media Flowchart

Media	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
TikTok/Insta Reels	•	•••	••	•	•			••	••			
Digital Display (Geo)	•	•••	••	••	••	•	•			•	•	
Google SEM	•	••	••	••	••	••	••	••	••	••	••	••
OOH (Billboards/Murals)		•••	••	•	••							
Spotify Streaming	•	••	••	•	••	•	•					
Influencer/Events		•••						••	••	•		
Review Incentives		•	••	••	••	••	••	••	••	••	••	••
Referral Program		•	••	••	••	••	••	••	••	••	••	••

• = Light Flight | •• = Medium | ••• = Heavy

Call to Action

Voodoo Doughnut is more than a sweet treat; it’s an experience, a brand with a personality, and a local landmark in the making. With this fully integrated, data-driven campaign, we’ve designed a media strategy that speaks directly to Nashville’s 18-34 audience and brings Voodoo’s unique culture to life through digital, social, local, and experiential touchpoints. From TikTok buzz to OOH murals, loyalty punch cards to late-night Spotify ads, every tactic is aligned with your brand truth and marketing goals. We’ve optimized the budget to balance big moments, like the grand opening, with long-term, sustained engagement. This campaign will not only make a splash in The Gulch but leave a ripple across Nashville’s food and culture scene. We’re excited to bring this plan to life, and we’d love the opportunity to earn your trust as your dedicated media planning partner.

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