



Out of Home Project

DIGITAL BILLBOARD HELPS THE HOMELESS FIND SHELTER

 ADVERTISING & MARKETING

On cold nights a Swedish digital billboard company provides directions on where to find the nearest homeless shelter.

At Springwise, we have seen advertising that has been personalised using AI and ads projected onto car windows. A new initiative uses advertising to help the homeless. Swedish advertising company Clear Channel owns around 1,000 digital billboards. Last year, the company began to wonder if the boards could be used for other purposes. Working in cooperation with the city and with homeless charities, Clear Channel launched the Out of Home Project. The project replaces some of the billboards' adverts with directions to the nearest homeless shelter whenever the temperature drops below 7 degrees Celsius.

According to Stockholm's shelters, homelessness in the city is on the rise. When temperatures dip below freezing, being able to quickly find a shelter can be a matter of life and death. Organisations such as churches and community centres are committed to opening their doors as emergency homeless shelters. While many of the homeless are aware of the location of permanent shelters, they may not be aware of the nearest of these emergency shelters.

The new ads direct people to the shelter nearest to each billboard. They also include information on where to donate necessities, how to become a volunteer and nearby day shelters for breakfast and warmth during the day. All of the ads are run for free. According to Ola Klingenberg, Vice President of Northern Europe, Clear Channel International, "Our billboards are located where people are, and thanks to technology, we can develop solutions that can help both people and cities. This is something we see as an extension of our work in creating true value in the cities we operate in."

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Takeaway:

Clear Channel has suggested that the shelter ads could be extended to their billboards across Europe. They will conduct an audit to determine if this would be helpful. What other public service information could be broadcast in this way?