

FX Network

Multiscreen audience engagement



FX Network

Los Angeles, California
www.fxnetworks.com

BLITZ

Santa Monica, California
www.blitzagency.com

HUGE

Brooklyn, New York
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Stink Digital

New York, New York
<http://stinkdigital.com>

Award-winning cable network engages viewers with cross-platform mobile apps and rich-media experiences developed with Adobe® Creative Suite® 5.5 Web Premium

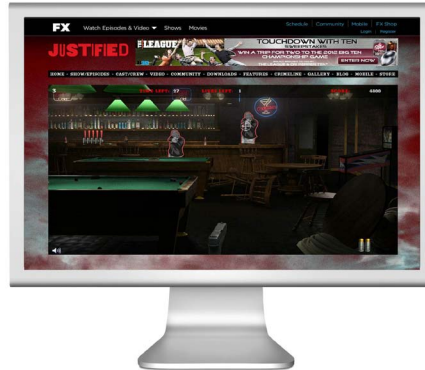
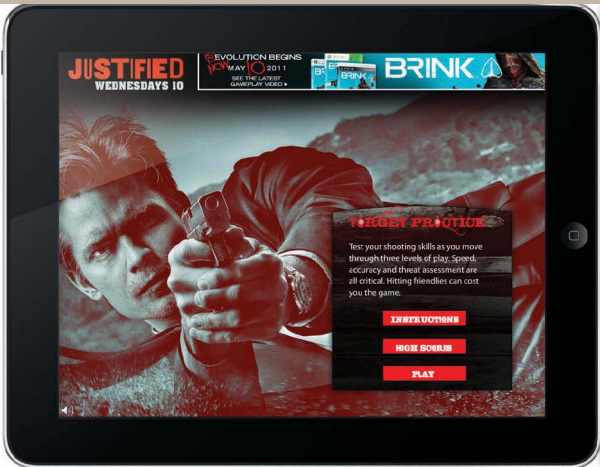
FX knows primetime. Millions of viewers have flocked to the cable channel each week to catch new episodes of award-winning and critically-acclaimed original programming such as *Sons of Anarchy*, *American Horror Story*, *Justified*, *Louie* and *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*.

But it takes more than weekly hour-long episodes to create a successful entertainment ecosystem in today's highly competitive media landscape. Each of FX's shows is unique, and the network believes that additional interactions with fans outside of an episode that targets multiple screens, online and mobile apps, games, or microsites, should be too. The network has a penchant for producing compelling digital activities that underscore the tone and tenor of each show in its line-up, seeking just the right look and feel that will resonate with viewers, and then deploying experiences to all relevant touch points.

"We want to create engaging experiences that people will talk about and share well after a show has aired," says Jason Phipps, vice president of Digital Media Marketing at FX Network. "With Adobe Creative Suite we can create new, inventive ways for fans to interact with the shows, enhance their experiences, and get them talking with friends or other fans."

FX Network works with leading digital agencies, including BLITZ, HUGE, and Stink Digital to develop an array of games, apps, and other viewing-enhancing experiences for some of its flagship programs.

The *Justified: Target Practice* casual game was originally designed as an online game, but using Adobe Flash Professional BLITZ developers were able to rapidly port the game to iOS and Android devices.



Challenge

- Expand entertainment ecosystem to reach as wide an audience as possible across platforms and devices
- Give viewers compelling ways to deeply engage with their favorite shows
- Drive viewers to cable television channel

Solution

- Create and build overall design concepts in Adobe Illustrator® and Adobe Photoshop® Extended
- Create cross-platform, web and mobile apps using Adobe Flash Professional, Flash Builder®, and Adobe AIR®

Benefits

- Created unique multiscreen experience for multiple franchises that cost-effectively extend cable network's brand
- Rapidly deployed interactive mobile app that resulted in social media buzz
- Met aggressive production schedules and deployed to multiple mobile platforms in a matter of hours
- Enabled designers and developers to work smoothly in integrated workflows with high levels of creativity and control

Customized experiences for FX originals

The designers and developers at BLITZ are Creative Suite loyalists with a reputation for creating unique multiscreen experiences that encourage fans to dive deep into many different FX brands, including *Justified*, *Sons of Anarchy*, and the network's latest release, *American Horror Story*.

Set in the sleepy southern town of Harlan, Kentucky, and depicting a Deputy U.S. Marshal with a renegade style of law enforcement, *Justified* saw its ratings soar in its first season. To further engage *Justified* fans, BLITZ used Adobe Flash® Professional to produce *Justified: Target Practice*, a casual game that lets fans play, connect, and share scores on social networks.

Before the second season of *Justified* aired, the FX team knew that an iPad version of *Justified: Target Practice* would enhance the fan experience. From a mobile implementation perspective, the larger screen of the iPad was very appealing. The game was originally designed for the web, but with little effort, the BLITZ developers stayed entirely in a Flash Professional workflow to rapidly port the original version of the game first to iPad and then to Android™ tablets.

It took the team just one hour to complete the iPad deployment. From there, it took only one more hour to pump out an Android version. No matter the screen, Flash Professional automatically recognizes which files from the app's common code base to push to the device. Just two developers worked on the entire deployment project.

"Using Adobe software, we were able to greatly improve our cross-platform development efforts, and rapidly port out versions of *Justified: Target Practice* for iOS and Android, taking full advantage of writing once and easily porting across screens," says Derek van den Bosch, vice president of delivery at BLITZ.

Similarly, HUGE worked with FX to deliver *Sunny Soundboard*, a platform enabling fans of *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia* to get even more "Sunny" in their lives. Fans can listen to quotes, watch clips, send tweets tagged #SunnyFX to show up in the live feed, follow Twitter updates from other fans, or visit the Sunny Schwag Shoppe. The app also ties in to the 2.5 million-strong *Sunny* fanbase on Facebook.

After developing the *Sunny Soundboard* app in Adobe Flash Professional and exporting it for iOS devices, HUGE developers used Adobe Flash Professional and Flash Builder to create a web-based version, as well as export it using Adobe AIR for Android devices. A simulation of the app is also available on the show's Facebook page.



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Jason Phipps
Vice President of digital media marketing,
FX Network

HUGE created the original *Sunny Soundboard* in Flash Professional and exported the app for the iPhone. Further development on the *Sunny Soundboard* platform was done using Flash Professional CS5.5 and Flash Builder 4.5, which enabled HUGE to create a web-based version and then leverage built-in exporter tools and Adobe AIR to output it as an app for the Android platform. At the same time, the agency used the web-based version on Facebook to create an app that mirrors the look and feel of a smartphone screen, giving fans the option to test out the mobile experience before downloading.

Device-specific deployment in just hours

From the network's business perspective, the value of mobile and web-based apps cannot be overstated. Each provides new avenues for reaching more viewers, bringing greater visibility to its brands, and cultivating new viewers as fans share their thoughts and feelings with friends and other fans. But delivering the apps efficiently for a variety of mobile devices such as tablets and smartphones that run on different platforms is always a looming challenge.

In an ongoing effort to capture greater numbers of fans on an increasing array of handheld devices, FX will seize new opportunities for multiscreen deployment using Flash Professional CS5.5, Flash Builder 4.5, and the compiler in Adobe AIR. Such opportunities abound, as the FX production schedule demands a handful of new core sites and extras for new FX series each year, as well as content refreshes and collateral experiences for returning programming.

"Adobe Creative Suite 5.5 software enables teams of designers and developers to keep pace with the production schedules of FX programming, while providing them with a powerful, integrated toolset to rapidly build the kind of innovative apps that have popularized mobile devices today," says van den Bosch.

Stink Digital relied on Adobe Flash Builder 4.5, Flash Professional CS5.5, and After Effects' CS5.5 to create *Family Portrait*, a rich, HD video experience that introduces viewers to the *American Horror Story* characters.



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Toolkit

Adobe Creative Suite 5.5 Web Premium.

Components used include:

- Adobe Photoshop CS5 Extended
- Adobe Illustrator CS5
- Adobe Flash Professional CS5.5
- Adobe Flash Builder 4.5

Adobe After Effects CS5.5

Adobe AIR

For more information

www.adobe.com/products/creativesuite/web

www.adobe.com/digital-media/

Efficient workflow from concept to delivery

The agencies FX works with rely heavily on the components of Creative Suite 5.5 Web Premium to create award-winning digital experiences. The FX team uses Adobe Photoshop CS5 Extended and Illustrator CS5 for creating and building out overall design concepts, and Flash Professional CS5.5 and Flash Builder 4.5 for developing rich media experiences and mobile apps.

For the launch of the *American Horror Story* series, Stink Digital used multiple Creative Suite 5.5 components to create *Family Portrait*, an interactive, rich media experience featuring fullscreen HD video. *Family Portrait* introduces the series' characters and lets viewers direct the action, dig deeper, and unlock exclusive video. The video intensive project involved working with Adobe Flash Builder 4.5, Flash Professional CS5.5, and After Effects CS5.5 to slowly reveal each character with just enough information to heighten interest in the show. Viewers can also access short video clips of each character that play on the sense of ambiguity that surrounds the series. Overall, the unique and engaging experience met the network's standards for quality and performance across browsers and operating systems.

FX clearly understands the overall value that the integrated toolset found in Creative Suite 5.5 Web Premium brings to contemporary marketing propositions. Adobe technology is woven into every phase of creating and porting content to emerging platforms, enabling the network to cost-effectively reach and engage our viewers wherever they congregate, in irresistible ways.



Adobe

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