

CLIENT OVERVIEW

iFLY, the experiential entertainment company that created modern indoor skydiving, launched a new facility in Gaithersburg, Maryland — iFLY Montgomery — to bring the thrill of freefall flight to three million residents in nearby Maryland counties.

CHALLENGE

iFly wanted to attract as much media interest as possible for its new Montgomery County, Maryland, facility — but the company had opened up a Northern Virginia facility in the prior year, which was independently pitching the media and garnering hits. This was the first time in the company's history that it had launched two facilities in the same TV market. We thus had the challenge of generating media coverage to differentiate the Montgomery County location and create local word-of-mouth buzz.

SOLUTIONS

On The Marc Media met the challenge with a two-pronged strategy: public relations and event marketing.

Public Relations

We executed an integrated communications strategy designed both to establish iFly Montgomery as a local brand and to promote event attendance.

- Devised unique story ideas and media angles
- Developed a news release and media advisories
- Pitched media and coordinated interviews of iFly representatives
- Conducted media training for iFLY representatives
- Created blog for website/social

Event Marketing

We used event marketing to create organized customer experiences and engage the community, organizing two open houses and a grand opening.

- Open Houses: We organized an open house to attract STEM-related youth organizations to let them know iFLY is the perfect destination for school and camp field trips, and another to introduce iFly to businesses as a great venue for corporate retreats.
- Grand Opening: We gathered local VIPs and a cheering crowd of excited new customers for a ceremonial ribbon cutting followed by hours of freefall flight in a party atmosphere that included food trucks, themed lighting, and music provided by a professional DJ.

For all the events, On The Marc Media:

- Conducted community outreach
- Created and distributed invitations
- Developed and emceed the run of show
- Live-streamed during the action

RESULTS

Extensive media coverage*, including:

- WTOP Radio
- DC101 Radio
- Washington Post
- Washington Post (Kids Post)
- I-270 News
- My MC Media
- Bethesda Magazine
- MoCo Show
- The Patch
- Montgomery County Sentinel
- Happy & Healthy on MMC-TV

(*Online media reach: 48,218,352; ad value equivalency: \$448,121)

Significant social media engagement

Open Houses:

- Corporations, STEM programs and summer camps booked numerous events at iFLY Montgomery as a result of their exposure during the open houses.

Grand Opening:

- Best grand opening in iFLY World history, with 150+ flights in just a few hours
- Generated a 32% RSVP rate (165 of the 515 invitees)
- Eight VIPs attended, including Gaithersburg's mayor and two city council members, a Montgomery County Council member, U.S. Senate and Congressional office reps, plus the president/CEO of both the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce and the Gaithersburg-Germantown Chamber of Commerce, respectively.
- Live-streamed flights during grand opening on social media generating thousands of social media shares.
- Edited video of ribbon cutting and grand opening for web and social media.