

Company: Lounge Group, Budapest, Hungary

Company Description: Lounge Group is one of the biggest full service communications agencies in Hungary, operating as a coordinated organization, so it can quickly and efficiently manage comprehensive integrated campaigns.

Nomination Category: Corporate Communications, Investor Relations, & Public Relations Categories

Nomination Sub Category: Communications or PR Campaign of the Year - Travel & Tourism

Nomination Title: BOLT: Breaking Barriers

1. If you are providing written answers to the questions for this category, you must answer this first question: Specify the date on which this campaign or program was launched:

The Bolt English-speaking driver category campaign was launched in July 2024 as a strategic initiative to enhance service quality in Budapest. Our research showed that international tourists often view taxi drivers as cultural ambassadors from whom they seek local recommendations and advice, requiring confident English communication skills. The campaign was strategically timed during the peak summer tourist season, coinciding with the return of a major global competitor to the Hungarian market.

2. Which will you submit for this nomination, a video of up to five (5) minutes in length about the nominated campaign or program, OR written answers to the questions for this category? CHOOSE ONE:

Written answers to the questions

3. If you are submitting a video of up to five (5) minutes in length, provide the URL of the nominated video here, OR attach it to your entry via the "Add Attachments, Videos, or Links to This Entry" link above, through which you may also upload a copy of your video.

<https://vimeo.com/1075592164/cc7f9ffa73>

4. If you are providing written answers to the questions for this category, you must answer this second question: Describe the genesis of the nominated campaign or program: the reasons it was initiated, the challenges it was created to address, the problems it was developed to solve, etc. (up to 250 words):

Total 214 words used.

Bolt faced a dual challenge in summer 2024: our research revealed that tourists view taxi drivers not merely as transportation providers but as unofficial guides who can offer authentic local recommendations and insights. For this valuable exchange to happen, confident English communication is essential. Simultaneously, the re-entry of a global competitor, Uber to the Budapest market posed a significant market threat, particularly among international passengers who represented 60% of summer users.

Market analysis identified a critical opportunity: while the competitor relied on global brand recognition, we could create genuine differentiation through enhanced human connection. Our customer research confirmed that communication difficulties were the most common complaint among international passengers, especially during airport transfers which had 23% higher average value than domestic rides.

Tourist demographic analysis showed most visitors came from countries with high English proficiency, seeking authentic local experiences rather than just transportation.

This created a unique opportunity to develop a service that would simultaneously:

- Transform routine taxi journeys into authentic local experiences
- Enhance drivers' skills and income potential
- Support Budapest's tourism infrastructure
- Build a sustainable competitive advantage through human capability development

The challenge extended beyond technical implementation to creating a comprehensive ecosystem including driver language training, app development, internal engagement, and strategic communication that would position this initiative as genuine social value creation.

5. If you are providing written answers to the questions for this category, you must answer this third question: Describe the development of the campaign or program: the planning process, the goal setting, the creative and media development, the scheduling, etc. (up to 250 words):

Total 212 words used.

The campaign was built on comprehensive research that identified tourists' desire for authentic local connections through taxi experiences. Planning focused on creating a holistic service ecosystem rather than just a technical implementation.

Key planning elements included:

- Partnership with Speak! Language School to develop custom English curriculum focused on everyday tourist interactions including local recommendations, cultural insights, directions to attractions, and practical advice
- Technical development of the app's new "English-speaking driver" category - the first in Bolt's history based on human capability rather than vehicle type
- Internal communication strategy emphasizing both professional development and revenue opportunities for drivers

The project was structured in three strategic phases:

1. Training and Development (June-July 2024): Driver recruitment, tourism-focused curriculum development, and app functionality creation
2. Internal Communication (July 2024): Facebook group announcements, motivational videos with language school instructors, highlighting both personal growth and business advantages
3. External Communication (July-August 2024): Teaser campaign, press release, B2B communication with expatriate organizations, and targeted digital advertising

Creative development emphasized Bolt's investment in human capability development rather than just technological solutions. The media strategy included:

- In-app communication highlighting the cultural ambassador role of drivers
- Targeted Meta advertising to English-speaking users within Budapest

- Content partnership with a major news portal during the Sziget Festival featuring tourist testimonials

- Collaboration with expatriate communities through XpatLoop organization

6. If you are providing written answers to the questions for this category, you must answer this fourth question: Outline the activities and concrete results of this campaign or program since the beginning of 2019. Even if your initiative started before 2023, limit your response to activities and results since the beginning of 2023 only (up to 250 words):

Total 205 words used.

The English-speaking driver initiative launched in July 2024 delivered exceptional results across all key metrics:

Driver Engagement:

- 550 drivers registered for language training (22% above target)
- 650 active English-speaking drivers achieved (20% of the fleet, 30% above target)
- 98% examination success rate
- 60% higher engagement on internal communications (50% above target)

Service Utilization:

- First two months: 21,000+ rides completed (far exceeding the 1,000-ride target)
- 200,000+ kilometers traveled
- Average wait time under 5 minutes during peak season
- Average ride length of nearly 10 km (significantly above city average)
- 27% of rides were airport transfers, confirming the tourism focus

Long-term Outcomes (by March 2025):

- 65,000+ successful rides since launch
- 600,000+ kilometers traveled
- Official partnership with Speak! Language School implemented
- Steadily diversifying international user base (UK 17.6%, US/Canada 10.2%, Israel 5.6%)

Business Impact:

- Average fare 5,800 HUF vs. urban average of 4,700 HUF (23% premium)
- Maintained market leadership despite competition
- Growing international user base across multiple markets

Communication Results:

- 2.2 million reach (46% above target)
- Comprehensive media coverage across mainstream, tourism, and English-language outlets
- 2 million reach through targeted Meta advertisements

Based on this success, Bolt implemented a permanent training program with discussions underway for international expansion.

7. You have the option to reference here any attachments of supporting materials throughout this nomination and how they provide evidence of the claims you have made in this nomination (up to 250 words):

Total 142 words used.

The supporting materials for this nomination include:

1. Campaign case study video showcasing the strategic approach and implementation of the English-speaking driver category, featuring interviews with drivers and international passengers
2. Internal communication posts from the drivers' Facebook group demonstrating the high engagement rates and enthusiasm for the language training program
3. Social media posts showing the external communication strategy targeting international visitors and Hungarian customers arranging transportation for foreign guests
4. Media partnership content from 24.hu featuring video testimonials from international Sziget Festival visitors sharing their positive experiences with English-speaking Bolt drivers
5. Press coverage compilation highlighting the initiative's reception in mainstream Hungarian media, tourism publications, and English-language outlets serving the expatriate community

These materials collectively demonstrate:

- The strategic planning behind the initiative
- The authentic enthusiasm and participation of drivers
- The positive reception by international passengers
- The comprehensive communication approach
- The tangible business results achieved

Attachments/Videos/Links:

[BOLT: Breaking Barriers](#)

