

## SUPER STORE

Image 4 pops up LIDS in Indy

Creating a 26,000-square-foot pop-up retail store is no easy feat, but Image 4 pulled it off with style for the baseball cap specialists at LIDS during Super Bowl week in Indianapolis this year. Image 4 is no stranger to the pop-up retail world, but how did the team pull off design, install and opening the huge footprint for business in the months and weeks leading up to the big game? Image 4 president Jeff Baker gives us an inside look.

### THE LEAD-UP

LIDS is based in Indianapolis, and recognized that the Super Bowl presented a great opportunity to put the brand in the spotlight.

"The brand not only wanted to create a pop-up store, but a store that the event demanded. They wanted to be noticed, make sales and use it as a test bed to see if pop-up would be a strategy that would work for the brand moving forward. They completely understood who was going to show up and why and took time to think about a sales strategy," Baker says.

The LIDS in-house retail team laid out the plan for the store, housed inside a former Nordstrom's department store in the middle of the NFL Zone in downtown Indy, just a few blocks away from Lucas Oil Stadium.

The Indianapolis Super Bowl Host Committee created a macro event location called

— The Huddle at Circle Center, which was its destination location for the event. The first floor of the store housed a food court, TV production space, art displays, a performance stage and a hopping nightclub.

LIDS took over a portion of the second floor of the space for its pop-up retail store.

"Their intent was to heavily brand the space as the LIDS Locker Room and merchandise it with Super Bowl and team-specific product," Baker says.

Image 4 joined the team in late summer of last year, and the store began to take shape. LIDS was responsible for most of the fixturing, all of the merchandise, staffing, IT and transactional technology in the store. Image 4 conceived, designed, created and installed the store. Baker's team was responsible for seamlessly integrating the merchandise into the space, handling lighting and special activities, as well as all of the logistics of set-up and dismantling.

### CHALLENGES

As the big game approached, Baker's team learned that the store's footprint had been expanded from 17,000 to 26,000 square feet in mid-December, with no budget increase, so the team worked hard to recreate the footprint without making the space look too sparse.

"We also worked diligently on a visual and merchandising strategy to make sure the space wouldn't be too repetitive," Baker says.

The building itself was another challenge Image 4 had to tackle. An older building located in highly urban setting meant loading dock access was problematic, so load-in was challenging.

Inside, the retail space for LIDS was on the second floor,



requiring escalator access to get up there.

"The space was invisible to people on the first floor. We needed to figure out how to pull visitor traffic from first floor to second floor," Baker says.

The solution to this problem turned heads at The Huddle all week. Image 4 designer James Schnauer conceived a three-dimensional hat installation, where the caps were suspended from the ceiling above the escalator in a way that made them appear to be floating in mid-air. A total of 460 white hats were suspended like a mobile, illuminated with moving lights and were impossible to miss from the first floor.

The store's properties were built at Image 4's New Hampshire facility and shipped to Indy, with each shipment sent out based on a detailed install strategy. The install began January 9 in preparation for the opening on January 27.

"The work we did beforehand on logistics and install strategy saved us a bunch, both in time and errors," Baker says.

The space was divided into



specific zones for the two teams vying for the championship, and immediately after the Super Bowl participants were determined, the Image 4 team got busy designing and printing Giants and Patriots graphics for the store.

"Within 36 hours of knowing which teams were in the game, we were hanging graphics," Baker says.

Adding a touch of theater to the space, Baker leveraged lighting schemes based off the team colors. These gel lights were also tied in to create color zones that reinforced non-team-specific graphic

areas in team colors.

"It worked extremely well and cut down for the need for time consuming and expensive team-specific graphics," Baker says.

Once the store was open, business was booming in the week leading up to the game. Shoppers were connecting with the space, engaging with interactives including a Madden football video game zone and a football toss game near the cash wrap queues.

"The space was extremely successful and succeeded all internal measures of the program," Baker says. ■