



<http://www.mustangheritagefoundation.org/>  
<http://www.mustangheritagefoundation.org/emm.php>  
<http://www.extrememustangmakeover.com/>

## Summary

The Mustang Heritage Foundation is a 501 (c)(3) public, charitable, nonprofit organization dedicated to facilitating successful adoptions for America's excess mustangs and burros. Founded in 2001, its mission is to help promote the Bureau of Land Management's National Wild Horse and Burro Program and increase the number of successful adoptions.\*

For the foundation's biggest event of the year, the Extreme Mustang Makeover, event coordinators used mobile keyword voting technology to increase audience participation and turn a once commonly disputed contest into an overwhelming success.

## Challenge:

Event marketers have always tried to create interactive and engaging campaigns during live events to drive attendee involvement and participation. Mobile text marketing serves as the best method to single-out mobile members and allow them to project a voice during busy benefits and festivities.

The Mustang Heritage Foundation holds eight non-profit competitions for horse enthusiasts across the country to highlight the value of training wild horses. It has always been challenging to receive live feedback from scattered audiences in real-time - while still maintaining overall fan satisfaction for event contests. During the biggest event of the year, The Extreme Mustang Makeover Competition, the Foundation implemented an innovative mobile voting campaign to help facilitate choosing the Fan Favorite Winner.



## Strategy:

Before the event, Creative Director Melissa Thorne knew there were 20 different mustangs that attendees could choose from for the Fan Favorite Award.

*"[Before this] we did not have an organized way of allowing fans to vote," explained Thorne, who was thrilled with the campaign's success. "We tried judging and voting by applause, but fans seemed extremely unsatisfied with these methods and did not agree with the results."*

*- Allowing fans to vote on-the-go: through their mobile phones*

Thousands attend the Extreme Mustang Makeover and it is the main marketing vessel driving awareness for the gentling of wild horses. It is a key concern to make sure participants are able to voice their opinion – the Mustang Heritage Foundation utilized audience cell phones, which have more than an 85% penetration rate in the US, to facilitate the process.

"We knew who the top 20 choices were going to be beforehand," Thorne pointed out, "so we created 20 different mobile keywords the night before." Using mobile keyword technology, fans could vote for their favorite mustang by texting the keyword assigned to their favorite and the results could be tallied in real time.

*- Clearly displaying all voting choice keywords for audience to text in*

During a live event, it is nearly impossible to physically get all attendees in front of a computer or at a booth to put in their vote.

Shortly after all wild horses had performed, Thorne's coordinators promoted the mobile keywords through microphone announcements, a large banner, and several signs held up around the crowd. Each mustang had a contestant number attached to its saddle near the hip so the audience could send in their choice through this method:

Text "Hip# to 99000" to vote for the Fan Favorite!

*- Announcing overall results of the vote + voting numbers for each contestant*

The marketing team was able to easily analyze the real-time results of the poll and identify the winner by using the All-In-One marketing platform which offers comprehensive reporting: Thorne's team was able to view voting percentages for each specific contestant and announce actual numbers which verified the legitimacy of contest.



## The Results

According to Thorne, 838 audience members participated in the mobile voting campaign with the contest winner receiving 160 text-ins. In total, the Fan Favorite horse and rider received over \$14,000 worth of prize money for performance during the Extreme Mustang Makeover.

**“It was a smashing success”  
Thorne Claims. “We want to use  
[this platform] again next year and  
will use the contact numbers we  
have collected to promote our  
future events.”**

The Mustang Heritage Foundation was pleased with this new, easy-to-use voting method and reported only positive feedback from the Extreme Mustang Makeover Fan’s Favorite Competition.

