Greatest advertising technique of all time (Hint: Involves urinals)

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Here at ECN, we often talk about alternative energy options. Sometimes it's solar power, other times wind power, and occasionally we dabble in the world of electric cars. But there is one energy option we've been sorely remiss in covering: pee-power.

By harnessing the power of pee, Captive-Media, a UK advertising firm that specializes in, er, unorthodox methods, has transformed loos—that's a bathroom to us yanks –all over the country. The company started by outfitting urinals with hi-definition, 12? LCD screens in IP-65 rated enclosures, which use sensors and an industrial-grade PC to transform the screen from a passive advertising machine to an interactive game box.

When a customer—typically in a bar or pub—enters the wash closet, the display over the urinal screen will initially host either advertisements or content. Once the user starts to, as the Duke of Wellington said, "pump the ship", the screen is transformed into one of six games, where the stream becomes the controller.

For the 55 seconds—on average—you're making the bladder gladder, you'll be able to play "On the Piste," where you snowboard your way down a mountain or Pirate Wave, where you protect your bay from pirates, or even "Artsplash," where you can color your own art -- sort of like the adult version of writing your name in the snow. If you choose, your score will be uploaded to a cloud-based system, accessible with a code provided to you at the end of your visit.

In all seriousness, it seems to be a pretty decent way to get beer sales up [1]. When the company offered an advertisement for Tiger Beer, sales went up 26 percent as compared to the year before. When they used the system to show a PSA about the effects of alcohol, 41 percent of people reported a new familiarity with a source for alcohol information. The company is hitting a tough, key demographic of young people who aren't paying attention to traditional advertising. It's interactive, it's definitely different, it's versatile, and it's fun. The only thing it isn't? Fair to girls.

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[1] http://www.captive-media.co.uk/case-studies/].%20