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Behind the Screens, Between the Lines

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A New 'Midnight Moment' In Times Square

By [STUART ELLIOTT](#)

The countdown to the new year at midnight on Dec. 31 has been a fixture of Times Square for decades. Soon, the other 364 days of the year will also get their own midnights in the spotlight.

The Times Square Advertising Coalition, whose members include companies that operate and own signs in the neighborhood, plans to introduce a nightly "Times Square Midnight Moment," beginning in 2011. Multiple digital billboards will be illuminated in a way that will offer a bright end to each evening in Times Square.

The goal is to add "a new must-see attraction" to the area, said Don Blanton, president and chief executive of Wow Factor, a company that belongs to the coalition along with companies like ABC Regional Sports and Entertainment Sales, Clear Channel Spectacolor, Sherwood Outdoor, Thomson Reuters and Titan Outdoor.

The "Midnight Moment" concept was among several initiatives to be announced at a reception on Thursday evening at the Nasdaq Marketsite in — where else? — Times Square. The reception is among numerous events being held this week during the 2010 Advertising Week.

The coalition is also to describe a public art campaign to take place in 2011, to be projected on the digital screens in Times Square in a partnership with the Times Square Alliance Public Art Program. The alliance is also a member of the coalition.

There are also plans to begin during the 2011 Advertising Week an annual awards ceremony that will be known as the Crossroads Awards. The coalition had originally planned to start giving out the awards, to celebrate achievement in outdoor advertising, during this year's Advertising Week.

The Crossroads Awards — so named to nod to the nickname for Times Square, as the crossroads of the world — will include a Times Square Sign Hall of Fame.

The first inductees will include Artkraft Strauss, which created many of the well-known, elaborate Times Square signs that go by the term spectaculars, and JVC, which has advertised in Times Square for more than 30 years.