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Bounty Paper Towels “We Love Our School” Program

2012 PRSA Silver Anvil Award Winning Case

OVERVIEW

Bounty Paper Towels “We Love Our School” program was an extension of the broader community relation’s campaign, “Make a Clean Difference,” seeking to make a difference in communities and schools nationwide by providing clean, creative learning environments (Jester, 2011). “We Love Our School” week allowed Bounty to creatively engage with their audience, and encourage parents to be involved in their children’s school communities. Together, these campaigns marked a shift in Bounty’s marketing strategy, from a brand that is durable and absorbent, to focusing on a confident clean that consumers can trust (Jester, 2011).

Key Target Publics:

- Moms with school-age children; particularly moms who are active in school communities
- School administrators/teachers

Intercessory Publics:

- PTO/PTA influential leaders
- Social Family Media

Bounty incorporated a two-step flow model of public relations by utilizing its intercessory publics to gain access to their target public, moms. By partnering with School Family Media, Inc., Bounty was able to gain a unique reach among influential leaders: PTO and PTA moms across the nation (P&G, 2011).

The purpose of this campaign focused on relationship management, establishing a connection with the target public, and creating brand awareness, loyalty, and goodwill.

RESEARCH

The first step in the ROPES process is research; this includes analyzing the situation, the organization, and its publics. The “Make a Clean Difference” campaign shed light on an opportunity for Bounty to give back to the community, while engaging their brand with a prominent market segment, and establishing a sense of brand loyalty among key publics.

Although Bounty did not directly state using the previous campaign as a pre-program benchmark, I think it is clear that knowledge was obtained from their previous efforts. The previous, “Make a Clean Difference” campaign was the source for identifying the opportunity for Bounty to become an advocate for clean schools (Bounty, 2012). Ultimately, this provided a benchmark for Bounty to understand the situation: Schools, classrooms, and teachers are lacking materials that could hinder the success of the education system.

To truly understand the correlation between clean learning environments and the quality of education, Bounty collaborated with Wakefield Research to conduct primary research in the form of a telephone survey of 1,001 U.S. elementary and middle school teachers (Bounty, 2012). The survey was conducted from January 26th till February 7th, 2011, and included investigation of classroom behaviors, and the responsibility teachers hold to obtain necessary materials for the classroom.

According to the PRSA case study (Bounty, 2012), the results of the telephone survey were as follows:

- Teachers spend an average of \$462 out of their own pocket, every year, for basic classroom supplies.
- 42% of teachers said they include classroom cleaning on their list of daily tasks.
- 94% of teachers believe students learn better in a cleaner environment.
- 54% of teachers admit that cleaning the classroom has interfered with their teaching.

- 51% report avoiding class projects that involve a dreadful cleanup.
- Teachers report using 1.5 rolls of paper towels, on average, per week.

I find the research methodology to be appropriate, but with room for improvements.

According to Smith (2013), the research process should include a thorough analysis of the organization, its publics, and the situation (p.20). Primary research conducted via the telephone survey provided insight into the unmet needs of school communities, and the issue of cleanliness in learning environments possibly directly affecting the student's education. The research does not, however, provide insight on the target public, nor the internal aspect of the organization itself. It is possible that this information was gathered in the previous campaign, but it was not mentioned in any of my research, so I will assume it was not.

I think Bounty strategically targeted their audience by connecting with them on something that they truly care about. However, the campaign could have benefited from conducting survey about parents, and their level of involvement in school communities, prior to the launch of this clean up initiative. This would have allowed Bounty to produce more specific, measurable objectives, which I will discuss in more detail later.

Also, I believe it would have been extremely beneficial for Bounty to conduct some form of a pre-test/post-test survey to better gauge the effectiveness of their program for one, and determine a more accurate evaluation of the correlation between the environment and students learning capabilities. My suggestion would be to observe classroom behavior prior to the clean up initiative, and then again following the clean up initiative.

OBJECTIVES

The campaign's objectives sought to leverage a point of passion for its target public, moms, and encourage engagement, and generate word-of-mouth and buzz for the Bounty brand (Bounty, 2012).

According to the PRSA case analysis (Bounty, 2012), the key objectives were as follows:

1. Touch and Improve Lives: Dramatically increase the number of schools/families touched by the campaign. This would serve as a action-oriented objective.
2. Connect with our target audience where she is receptive: Overlay campaign into conversations already taking place in environments she cares about. Utilize social media to create word-of-mouth and buzz. This would serve as an acceptance-oriented objective.
3. Deliver core campaign messages: Bring to life core campaign messages of "clean" and "value." This would serve as an awareness-oriented objective.

According to Smith (2013), objectives should follow five principles, at the very least: include an infinitive verb, contain a single outcome, be measurable in quantifiable terms, target a specific audience, and include a time frame for achieving said objective (p. 107).

Not only are the objectives lacking the necessary elements, but they are also stated in such broad terms that it is unclear what exactly they are trying to achieve. Therefore, making it difficult to conduct a thorough evaluation of the campaign's outcomes. Throughout my research, I found it very difficult to find clear distinction between the goals, objectives, strategies, and tactics. They almost just blended together as one overall message, or goal, of the campaign. I believe Bounty had the right ideas, and their goals were ultimately satisfied, but they were poorly communicated.

PROGRAMMING

Bounty's main strategy was to engage audience participation by encouraging parents and teachers to take the pledge to 'Make a Clean Difference' long after the Bounty "We Love Our School" week.

According to the PRSA case analysis (Bounty, 2012), the key strategies and tactics were as follows:

- Partner with School Family Media to provide clean kits for 1,000 schools.
- Collect data from the survey of 1,001 schoolteachers.
- Partner with spokespeople:
 - o Julianne Moore, 2001 Golden Globe nominee, and mother of two
 - o Kimora Lee Simmons, "Life in the Fab Lane" star and mother of three.
 - o GTV design-duo, and parents of seven, Bob and Cortney Novogratz.
- Facebook sweepstakes for \$50,000 school makeover
- Capitalize on key moments and news hook: program launch on Valentine's Day and just in time for spring cleaning

I believe the strategies and tactics were relative to set objectives. The main strategies and tactics Bounty utilized include: audience engagement, encouraging publics to take the 'Make a Clean Difference' pledge via Facebook; obtain alliances and credibility with influential leaders, and celebrity spokespeople, including the distribution of PSAs; and gaining positive public perception of the Bounty brand through relationship management with their target audience, moms.

EVALUATION

While methods of evaluative research were not specifically stated, it does seem evident that research was conducted. The reports of the campaign outcomes suggest methods of

monitoring social media, media hits, and number of pledges. Furthermore, the research suggests that objectives and goals of the campaign were achieved.

I think it would have been most effective to perform some form of a pre-test/post-test survey, as I stated previously. This would allow Bounty to better gauge the true effect the learning environment has on a child's learning capabilities. For example, if they performed a pretest observation of students in their natural learning environments, followed by a post-test observation of students in Bounty-cleaned classrooms, Bounty would be able to better evaluate the suggested correlation between clean learning environments and quality education.

According to the PRSA case study (Bounty, 2012), the results of the campaign were as follows:

- Bounty engaged more than 25,000 volunteers to clean classrooms across the nation (a 1,000+% increase from the previous campaign).
- 2,689 consumers took the "We Love Our School" pledge to continue the cleanup initiative in their communities even after the end of this program.
- "We Love Our School" week provided cleaner classrooms for more than 430,000 students (a 2,000% increase from the previous campaign).
- Bounty received an additional 19,000 "likes," and more than 1.6 million positive views on Facebook.
- Bounty obtained more than 1.34 billion media impression during the course of the campaign.

I think the results of the campaign went above and beyond the set objectives, and were a sheer success for the Bounty brand reputation, and its relationship with target moms.

STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship focuses on nurturing the relationship between the organization and its publics, establishing an outlet for continued communication, and obtaining their support and interest in your organization. Stewardship is more than a part of the process in Bounty's initiative, it is the backbone of Bounty's pledge to bring clean environments to school communities across the country. Bounty successfully targets its key publics by taking an interest in something they care about: their children, and therefore, the schools of their children. Moms are a highly-targeted market in the U.S., and Bounty is able to successfully reach them by targeting the one thing that will bring them all together; their children, and their concern for quality education for those children.

According to Kelly, there are four elements of stewardship: Reciprocity, Responsibility, Reporting, and Relationship Nurturing (p.283).

Reciprocity refers to the organization demonstrating gratitude for the support of their publics (Kelly, p.284). Bounty's "We Love Our School" week exemplified this through thank you notes that were distributed to teachers, and the sweepstakes makeover that was provided to award them for their support. Reciprocity could also be attributed in the Bounty case to the "we help you, you help us" notion, in which Bounty gives back to communities, and hopes for their support of the Bounty brand in return.

Responsibility refers to an organization keeping its promises (Kelly, 285). Bounty proves its commitment to providing cleaner schools in communities across the country by going above and beyond what it originally proposed at the start of the program; instead of one sweepstakes school makeover, they gave TWO school makeovers!

Relationship nurturing is the essence of Bounty's entire campaign strategy. Bounty focuses on nurturing their relationship with their most vital public: moms. Bounty is letting

moms across the nation know that Bounty cares about schools, which in turn means they care about children, and therefore moms will care about, and support, the Bounty brand (Kelly, p.286).

CRITIQUE

Overall, I find this to be an exemplary model of a community relations campaign strategy, with room for minor improvements. I think the biggest critique I could offer would be to provide more clarity, and structure in the presentation of their strategic plan. As stated before, the research methods were a little vague, and allow room for improvements. The objectives were poorly written, and lacking the necessary elements, posing a challenge for the evaluation process. And the strategies and tactics were communicated as one idea.

A challenge for me, in the analysis of this case study, was organizing all of their goals, objectives, strategies, and tactics into a model relative to what is outlined in the ROPES process. I am very fond of structure and organization, and I think the presentation of their strategic plan could have been tighter. The following is a depiction of my attempt to outline Bounty's campaign strategy in a more formal format; the main goals, the specified objectives to achieve said goals, the strategy implemented to satisfy said objectives, and the specific tactics used to implement that strategy.

GOAL 1: To Touch and Improve Lives – this is part of the mission of Procter and Gamble brands in general, and I think it points to the bigger picture. Therefore, it would better serve as a goal than an objective. The objectives desired to achieve such goal could be:

1. To have an effect on the number of people impacted by the campaign, specifically to secure 800 additional U.S. schools to participate in the clean up initiative within three months.

- a. This is an Action objective.

2. To increase parent-teacher involvement in communities around the county, specifically to gain 10,000 volunteers for the clean up initiative, within three months.

- a. Action objective

GOAL 2: Deliver core messages of “clean” and “value.” Again, as an objective this is extremely vague and hard to measure. An objective desired to achieve this goal could be:

1. To create awareness of the Bounty mission, specifically to obtain positive public perception by obtaining an increase in media impressions by 30% in three months.

- a. Awareness objective

GOAL 3: To obtain brand differentiation; to position the Bounty brand among its key public, moms with school-age children. A desired objective toward this goal could be:

1. To secure a reputation of goodwill and loyalty, specifically to increase positive buzz about Bounty brand, among mothers with school-age children, by 30% in three months.

- a. An Acceptance objective

Overall, I think Bounty’s campaign is an exemplary model of the ROPES process, but for the purpose of educating others on how to sufficiently develop a strategic plan, it could have followed a more structured format in order to make the set objectives, strategies, and tactics of the campaign clear.

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