



# CAMPAIGNS FOR A CAUSE

BY NANCY GIGES

Corporate social responsibility is rapidly becoming a key component of today's marketing plans; but for many years, companies weren't getting much credit for all the good they were doing. That's changing as marketers realize the value of CSR and engage public relations professionals to help them expand efforts to embrace a strategy that goes far beyond just handing out money.

When it comes down to it, CSR is a natural fit for public relations, says Mike Swenson, president, Barkley PR/Cause. "At its core, PR is about creating opportunities for a brand to interact with its audiences and create credibility and a positive feeling about the brand," he says. "Nothing says credibility more than a brand that is operating as a good corporate citizen."

Luke Lambert, president of Gibbs & Soell Public Relations, agrees: "An organization builds trust every time it makes a promise to its community and keeps that promise. Those promises become part of a broad social vision."

PR is the discipline that helps organizations maintain ongoing dialogues with all their constituencies in both local and global communities. It uses the communication function to "map the assets, streamline an offer, develop positioning and messaging" for resources deployed across a company, says Kristen Spensieri, CSR leader, Chandler Chicco Cos.

Two words key to managing a reputation are authenticity and transparency, says Annie Longworth, global sustainability practice leader, Cohn & Wolfe, and that's what PR is all about.

Tara Greco, senior VP-head of North America corporate responsibility practice, APCO Worldwide, agrees. "What all stakeholders are looking for is transparency in communications, not just telling them all the good things but everything related to a business... about how you are interacting with the environment, what your social objectives are and how that connects to your business objectives."

Tactical initiatives are also becoming more focused, as companies choose signature programs and dedicate more resources to a single, narrower effort.

To get an overview of the kinds of programs and expertise public relations firms are offering in this critical area, here's a roundup of campaigns:

## CSR in Action at Tom's of Maine

Engaging people in doing good work in communities across the country has been an integral part of the Tom's of Maine business since the shoe company was founded 41 years ago. "Volunteerism is part of Tom's of Maine's DNA," says Susan Dewhirst, the company's PR and goodness programs manager.

Three years ago, Tom's turned to Cohn & Wolfe to help it involve its core consumers even more. The result: 50 States for Good, an annual program that just award-

ed \$150,000 to six nonprofits. The program is open to smaller, grassroots nonprofit organizations that mobilize community volunteers to have a local impact. From 20 semifinalists, the public votes for the winner. The top nonprofit is awarded \$50,000 and five runners-up each receive \$20,000.

The program has been very successful. "People love our company when they know about us, and we know this is helping us raise brand awareness," Ms. Dewhirst says. In fact, in the 12 months ended Aug. 31, Tom's of Maine increased household penetration by 29 percent, with 50 States for Good a key factor in that.

## CSR in Action at P&G

MSLGROUP'S work with Procter & Gamble Co. is what Scott Beaudoin, senior VP-group director, Beyond Purpose, and North America director-cause marketing and CSR, MSLGROUP Boston, calls "purpose-inspired marketing."

## Kori Reed

VP-Foundation and Cause  
ConAgra Foods



We've been working with Fleishman-Hillard for more than five years, starting with the philanthropic area. ConAgra Foods and the ConAgra Foods Foundation have been silent partners in the child hunger space since 1993; however, we wanted to bridge the foundation's philanthropic work, which we see as an investment

in the community, and the work the ConAgra Foods brands do to get consumers involved in child hunger. That's where the [PR] agency comes in—to connect the dots.

With the help of Fleishman-Hillard, ConAgra Foods can tell the story of our collective efforts and tie everything together for a stronger story with a bigger impact. For example, Hunger-Free Summer is a foundation activity we've been engaged in for the past two years to provide more meals to children during the summer months when school is out and they have reduced access to nutritious meals. It's part of the foundation's \$10 million, five-year commitment to Feeding America.

"Child Hunger Ends Here" is a brand campaign that is separate and distinct from the ConAgra Foods Foundation. The cam-

All P&G brands now have a purpose statement, he says, driving a more strategic way of factoring social responsibility and cause marketing into their businesses.

For example, Dawn's "Everyday wildlife champions" umbrella grew out of the discovery by animal rescuers some 35 years ago that Dawn was an excellent cleaner to use on animals that had been involved in oil spills. That discovery fit perfectly with the dish detergent's tough-on-grease-yet-safe positioning. Since then, P&G has contributed millions of dollars to wildlife organizations.

In its most recent program with MSLGROUP, P&G is using the Dawn Facebook fan page to support the movement by providing information about wildlife conservation. It also contributes \$1 to wildlife organizations for each bottle of Dawn purchased. The page has generated more than 18,000 fans, 312,000 impressions and "significant" consumer engagement and feedback.

## CSR in Action at Green Mountain Coffee Roasters

Green Mountain Coffee Roasters has long been an advocate of fair trade, a marketing approach that helps producers in developing countries improve trading conditions while promoting sustainability.

"Fair trade is important to us because we feel that the highest-quality coffees come from the communities with the highest quality of life," says Sandy Yusen, PR director for Green Mountain. "It's part of delivering to our consumers, who are coffee lovers, the best possible coffee in a socially responsible way."

This year, Green Mountain turned to Cone to help it tell consumers about the positive impact they can have by buying fair trade coffee using Fair Trade Coffee Month in October. Cone identified two musicians who are passionate about the issue, Michael Franti and Grace Potter, and engaged them to give exclusive live performances on Green Mountain's Facebook page.

"Cone helped us crystallize the concept and focus on how we can make a difference and achieve our goal" of broader awareness, Ms. Yusen says.

## CSR in Action at UPS

APCO's work with United Parcel Service of America over the past 20 years illustrates how a CSR strategy evolves as a company evolves. When UPS was privately held and mostly

paid runs during the school year and, during the fall months, [it] gets consumers engaged by collecting ConAgra Foods UPCs and helping host or participate in school-sponsored drives to collect food that will be donated to local food banks. During the spring months the campaign encourages consumers to enter a product code, which in turn triggers a donation.

While these are separate and distinct activities managed by different internal teams, they are related to the same cause and connected under the broader umbrella of our social responsibility platform—Good for You, Good for the Community and Good for the Planet.

The key is how we tell our story in a holistic way. We engaged our agency to help us drive awareness of our commitment.

Fleishman-Hillard has helped us authentically leverage our assets against child hunger in America. As a company, ConAgra Foods donated 1 million meals a month last year through our partner, Feeding America, and the "Child Hunger Ends Here" campaign engaged consumers to deliver an additional 2.5 million meals. In addition, the ConAgra Foods Foundation invested millions of dollars in the child hunger space.

The agency helps us tell a more robust story about our efforts in a much more holistic way. They're able to look at the best practices in the landscape and find the social media, celebrity management and traditional media that are right for us. They continue to refresh the story and keep the word out there about our work in the child hunger space.



a U.S. company, one issue it addressed was hunger in the U.S. To leverage its expertise in logistics, it worked with food banks and meal services to help route food and organize inventory in the most efficient way.

When UPS went public and expanded globally, adding a broader group of stakeholders, the company turned to APCO to help expand its CSR effort. Today, the company offers humanitarian relief and disaster preparedness as one focus and teen driving safety as another, both capitalizing on UPS' core competencies of distribution and safe driving.

"It's important to not only understand what you do well but that your corporate responsibility strategy grows, adapts and changes as your business grows, adapts and changes," Ms. Greco says. "It's all part of reputation management. As your stakeholders shift and change, and their expectations shift and change, you need to be able to change with them."

### CSR in Action at Syngenta

Addressing the fact that more than 49 million Americans suffer from hunger, global agribusiness Syngenta introduced Weeding Out Hunger, a program designed to en-

gage its customers—growers—in supporting food banks throughout the U.S. The program was timed to coincide with the introduction of Syngenta's Hallex GT, an herbicide used in growing corn.

Syngenta showcased the program at nine trade shows and industry events, including a final event at Syngenta's U.S. headquarters in Wilmington, Del. More than \$100,000 and five tons of nonperishable food items were collected and distributed to 80 food banks in 24 states.

"Our people at Gibbs & Soell worked hand in hand with the client to assemble and put together the donations. It was hard work, but our people found it a joyful experience," Mr. Lambert says. "It goes back to the company's bottom line—one of its global missions is to feed 9 billion people by 2050. You can see how you can have corporate global objectives and build campaigns around that in both local and regional markets."

### CSR in Action at Lee Jeans

In 1995, Lee Jeans approached Barkley with a problem that advertising could not solve. How could Lee take advantage

of the growing trend of more casual dress codes in the workplace to sell more denim? Research showed low perception of the Lee brand by female consumers ages 24 to 49, the exact segment Lee wanted to reach.

Barkley's recommendation was to make wearing jeans to work about supporting a cause, not a fashion statement—a concept that women in particular embrace. For one specific day, dubbed Lee National Denim Day, companies nationwide were challenged to let employees wear denim to work in exchange for their \$5 donations to support the fight against breast cancer. That first year, more than 3,000 companies participated, raising \$1.4 million, which far surpassed Lee's \$1 million goal. The numbers have continued to rise each year, with Lee National Denim Day raising more than \$83 million since the effort started.

The campaign is refreshed each year with a new national celebrity spokesperson and an increased online presence. From a business perspective, the campaign has forged an emotional connection between Lee and its target consumer, increasing denim sales and focusing Lee's overall philanthropic strategy. ●

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