

9-2 Successful Brand Awareness

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There are a variety of strategies that businesses use to create brand awareness for their PR campaign. The most obvious approach is to have an attractive logo and slogan to match the message of the campaign. This is a great first impression to potential customers and a good way to create a positive perception. However, it is about so much more to a campaign than these fundamental elements. When operating a business, one must determine what actions they want their users or customers to take and design a message around that (Willis, 2011). Not only that but the campaign has to meet a certain demand to give customers a reason to care about it. If it is a worthy cause or initiative that affects the lives of consumers directly then it should have no problem getting the attention it deserves. The recent ALS campaign (Which will be explained in detail later) was based on a terminal disease that affects millions of Americans each year. In the form of images, video testimonials and the official Ice Bucket Challenge video recorded by millions of supporters, this campaign was proven to be successful. Characteristics such as triggering a person's emotions are another way to garner major attention. With this being said, there are always businesses that set the example for others to follow when taking advantage of PR Campaigns. To avoid the "digital divide" of the 21st century, most businesses, are finding that social media is a great way to reach their customers, create brand awareness and share compelling stories to retain new business. The traditional approaches still hold true to most of these campaigns. These consist of having a defined target (or target audience), ensuring the campaign has a clear focus, it is measurable, and making sure the campaign is clear and simple to understand (Willis, 2011).

One of the first essential elements or characteristics that most successful businesses use is evaluating the right medium to market their campaign (Nijiru, 2010). When a business determines the desired result of a campaign whether it be to educate people or to influence them

to invest in their products they need the appropriate outlet to be effective in this effort. In other words, mediums could include blogging, creating videos YouTube, sending Email Newsletters, to potential customers or creating radio/television advertisements. Social media being used as a medium has turned into a primary element to launch PR campaigns for socially responsible causes. A prime example would be the 2014 ALS "Ice Bucket Challenge" campaign that was released in an effort to raise awareness for the Neurodegenerative disease called Amyotrophic Lateral Disease. (ALS, 2014) The impact left on social networking sites resulted in 15.6 million dollars raised due to videos of people dumping buckets of ice on their heads as a part of spreading the initiative (Lee, 2014). The various networking site used for this campaign was but not limited to Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube. This campaign cohesively produced 2.4 million unique videos eliciting their support for the Ice Bucket Challenge. The characteristic of such a successful outcome was not only due to this being a great cause worthy of support but because it used integrated marketing tactics. For the same amount of customers that you find on social networks will remain a plethora of others that you have yet to discover that could match your target audience as well (Contentfac, 2014). It is easier to market a campaign via social networking sites because people access these sites for interaction purposes and thus will be more receptive to what you have to say without feeling "sold" on anything.

The next element of a successful campaign is to have a target that you are aiming to reach. This could be a specific target audience or an objective that you are trying to accomplish specific to a certain demographic of individuals. As a business owner, one must ask themselves what actions they want your target to take during and as a result of the campaign. Part of what makes Facebook and Twitter so interesting is the ability to search for and interact with your target audience with ease. Businesses can determine their interests, habits, and dislikes via social media

so they can ensure that they are reaching the people they intended to. Not only that but it addresses the problem of the Digital Divide which causes people to lose the personal connection between the client and business itself. Another reason why this campaign is so effective is because businesses can address problems, and answer questions more expediently. They know what their target wants and will find ways to accommodate them within their campaign. Some campaigns target substance abuse addicts while others target only seek after a certain gender such as Dove Body soap.

Another element essential for PR campaign success is having a viral appeal. Similar to the ALS Challenge, more customers are becoming more directly involved in the campaign by having the opportunity to profess their beliefs (MRaven, 2014). At times, when it comes to a PR campaign of any kind, people don't support what you're doing but why you're doing it. Dove Body soap is used here to illustrate this point. The company sparked a viral campaign with their "Real Body Stretches" promotional video. This video contrasts how women view themselves versus how others view them. The company found that 54 percent of women confess to being their own worst critic of how they look and judge their beauty based on external circumstances (Ankeny, 2014). This PR campaign went on to become the most viral video ad of all time, totaling 114 million total views. The elements behind producing such a viral campaign such as this would be to trigger a strong emotional response among viewers. Creating feelings of warmth, happiness, and knowledge such as this campaign will give your business great kudos and naturally elicit more support. Having Integrated Marketing content is especially relevant here as well. The sharability must be feasible enough to not only view it on YouTube but share it amongst friends via social media (Stampler, 2013).

Another element that is effective to maintain a good business perception is having a very focused campaign. Let's take Wal Mart for example, who markets to middle and lower class individuals. The low prices offered on a consistent basis make this super center very competitive in the market and by these types of people. Now, compare their target audience to that of Tiffany's, the jewelry company. This brings about a major difference because Tiffany's is known to market higher quality and more expensive jewelry to their demographic. Wal Mart and Tiffany's can't partner up to take on joint ventures because both of these companies have two separate visions (Baldwin, 2014). Even the most well known and respected businesses can fail miserably at having a poorly focused campaign. Some businesses think that you can just have a lot of money to gain attention, such as American Apparel who focused their special deals and promotions on those that were affected during Hurricane Sandy. A lot of New York residents found this campaign to be less than amusing by attempting to capitalize on a disaster that cost lives (Smith, 2012).

A charity based campaign however, launched by The Smile Generation provided aid to those in need rather than capitalizing on their sufferings. This organization created a campaign called "100 Wells for Ethiopia" that consisted of raising \$1 million to build 100 wells in Ethiopia. Each one required 10,000 to be build. Therefore with the help of campaign specific logos and other creative materials more that 271 offices were able to start individual campaigns to assist in this effort. This resulted in this being the 2014's Best Message Focused campaign of the year (Causemarketing, 2014). To demonstrate how effective using logos, with the unique slogan "Building Wells, Changing Lives" was, they were able to raise \$1, 314, 505 for this campaign. As a result 131 wells were built, which was more than their original goal.

To be effective in the marketplace, there are more than enough elements to ensure a successful campaign. A few of the highlighted characteristics would be to define a medium to reach individuals, and have a defined target that reaches the correct people. These two combined will help a business owner determine how they want people to respond to the campaign. The Dove Body Soap campaign helped women around the world obtain confidence in their image while the ALS campaign helped to raise money for their cause. Support and a measure of success can be defined in various ways if you accomplish the desired goals. Afterwards, one should consider creating a campaign that has viral appeal to share on social networking sites. This will ensure longevity among those that you want to support the campaign.

