

Creating A World with More Birthdays

American Cancer Society with Brodeur Partners

Overview

Brodeur Partners and the American Cancer Society developed the More Birthdays movement to deepen understanding of the Society and unite people to create a world with less cancer and more birthdays. The ACS had been a major legacy charity brand for 96 years, and enjoyed tremendous brand awareness, trust, and a sterling reputation. However, as the Society continued to “get older,” understanding of the its values began to decline. The Society turned to Brodeur Partners and The Martin Agency for guidance on how to reinvent itself among women 35-64. The bold campaign was the Official Sponsor of Birthdays, and its value proposition was simple: the ACS saves lives.

Research

-In 2007 the ACS conducted its biennial Image Study that revealed:

1. Long-standing positives about the brand
2. Knowledge about the Society decreased with fewer people reporting they knew “a lot” or even “a little” about the organization which threatened ACS’s ability to attract donors and volunteers as the data also showed that greater knowledge translated to greater affinity for the organization
3. Competition was gaining visibility and traction among the Society’s core constituents

Key Audiences

-Women (35-64)

(The primary audience because they have the greatest impact on health, community service and philanthropic decisions in the home.)

-Multicultural audiences, particularly African Americans since this group is disproportionately affected by cancer

Objectives

1. Increase knowledge of what the Society does among women 35-64
2. Increase emotional connection and personal relevance of the Society among key audience
3. Spur engagement through a national movement for a world with less cancer and more birthdays
4. Create an army of brand ambassadors through extensive internal communications
5. Establish the Society as the Official Sponsor of Birthdays
6. Empower women to prevent and fight cancer by educating them about the breadth of Society resources

Planning/Execution

The budget for the More Birthdays public relations brand refresh was \$1 million/year.

1. Create an army of ambassadors (ACS generated significant excitement among its volunteers and staff nation wide by conducting exhausted videos presentations of the new value proposition and campaign theme.)
2. Made engagement easy and convenient (Given the increasing amounts of time women spend online, the team created a vibrant “more birthdays” community through interactive and social media tools to make involvement fun and easy. This included a new website, Facebook presence, Twitter feed and blog, and ongoing email marketing with promotions.)
3. Established ACS as a birthday expert (To connect ACS to birthdays, the team:
 1. created a benchmark birthday survey that gauged attitudes and insights about celebrating birthdays, which successfully generated attention from top national consumer press, including *USA Today* and *Prevention Magazine*
 2. to reinforce the notion that a healthy lifestyle can help prevent cancer, the team launched a national contest to reinvent the birthday cake with the Culinary Institute of America— this promoted raving reviews from *The New York Times*, *Glamour* and *SELF* among others.
4. Met women where they really are (Because blogging has become a powerful source of connectivity for women, the team recruited a dozen respected female bloggers for the Society’s Blogger Advisory Council, aimed to build awareness and activism around the More Birthdays movement online.)

Evaluation

- More than 300 million earned media impressions (96% directly reflect core messages)
- Billions of social networking impressions
- A decorated ad campaign
- A legion of internal brand ambassadors
- Significant increases in knowledge of the Society’s mission and personal relevance as measured by a monthly tracking study
- Unaided recall among women associating with ACS with the Official Sponsor of Birthdays was 44%
- The core movement is 54,000 members strong