

# TERM PROJECT: What makes a successful public relations campaign tick?

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**Due** Oct 16 by 11:59pm    **Points** 300    **Submitting** an external tool

**Available** Aug 14 at 12am - Oct 16 at 11:59pm 2 months

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**This final project will be due by 11:59 p.m. Friday of the ninth week of the course.**

Your term project will analyze the public relations efforts of an organization of your choice, subject to the instructor's approval during the third week of the course.

You will submit a 6 to 8 page analysis for a specific event, campaign or initiative for your chosen organization, as outlined below. You are required to submit your choice of organization to the instructor during class in week three through the [Week 3 Discussion: Term Project Check-in](#) discussion. Before selecting an organization (corporate, nonprofit, institution), conduct some research to ensure that you will be able to access the information you will need to complete the project.

Through research, you will need to uncover its public relations objectives and track how well it met those objectives through measurable results such as media exposure, event success or business results. Select your organization carefully. Find an organization about which you can obtain plentiful information. Avoid being forced to start over at the last minute.

## The Assignment

Throughout history, there have been many successful public relations campaigns. For your term project this semester, your job is to select one of these campaigns. Then, drawing on everything you've learned this term, write a six- to eight-page paper reviewing the campaign and analyzing its goals, strategies, tactics and success.

You are free to study any campaign you like from the past or present, presuming you are able to research and find the necessary background information for the assignment. Below, however, you'll find a selection of 17 famous campaigns. You are free to choose any of these as well.

**BIG HINT:** Before choosing a campaign, do some preliminary research on several that sound of interest.

Once you have done your research and selected your campaign, you may begin writing. Your paper should contain the following components. Be sure to include sections identified in **boldface** below.

### **I. Introduction**

Describe the organization that you are choosing to review. Be specific. Discuss:

- Organization's history and background
- Organization's Mission, Vision and Brand Essence
- History of PR efforts, if pertinent

Describe the specific campaign you are reviewing:

- the media that were used (TV, billboards, publicity stunts, websites, Facebook, etc.)
- the format of the campaign (public service announcements, newspaper editorials, public symbols a' la Smokey the Bear, etc.)
- when and where the campaign took place

This description should be OBJECTIVE. Just explain what the program is about without making judgments or analysis. When you are finished with this section, the reader should have a clear picture of what the campaign looked, sounded and felt like, and when and where it appeared, and who is behind it.

### **II. The Problem Statement**

Write a simple, clear statement that summarizes the problem that the campaign is intended to solve. For more explicit details on what this statement should and should not include, refer to page 244-245 of your textbook.

In Week 5, you are asked to create a Problem Statement for your term project in the [Week 5 Discussion: Term Project Jump-Start --The Problem Statement](#). Refer to your previous work for this section of your paper.

### **III. Situation Analysis**

Write all the background information needed to expand upon and illustrate in detail the meaning of your problem statement. Your

situation analysis should include all that is known about the situation, its history, forces acting upon it, and those involved or affected by it, internally and externally.

That includes any important context about events going on in the world and society at the time. (For example: during World War II, the government created campaigns encouraging people to comply with the rationing programs that were necessary while the war was going on. In a situation analysis, you would need to provide information about commodity shortages, concerns among the poor that rations would not be distributed equally, etc.)

In Week 6, you are asked to create a one-paragraph summary of a situation analysis in the [Week 6 Discussion: Term Project Jump-Start -- The Situation Analysis](#). You are encouraged to begin with that summary and now expand upon it for the final paper.

#### IV. Goals, Audiences/Publics, Objectives, Strategies and Tactics

Keeping in mind what you learned in Chapter 12 about PR Planning and Programming, analyze the campaign you selected and write a paragraph on EACH of the following:

- **Goals: (see p. 264-265)** – What is the overall outcome that this campaign has been designed to achieve? Cite components of the campaign that support your analysis.
- **Audiences/Publics: (p. 267)** – Who is this campaign designed for? Be as specific as possible. Cite examples from the campaign that support this analysis.
- **Objectives: (p. 270-271)** – What are the key results that this campaign is designed to achieve? Think of these as smaller-scale outcomes that collectively lead to the larger goal.
- **Strategies and Tactics (p. 273-274)** – What is the OVERALL approach (strategy) that was taken to achieve the campaigns objectives and goals? What specific tactics (communication tools) were used to support this strategy? (Choose those that are applicable)
  - Traditional media (print, TV, outdoor, etc.)
  - Digital/social media (websites, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, blogs, etc.)

#### V. Evaluating Campaign Success

Was the campaign a success? Why or why not? Did it make a difference? Did it show measurable results? (RESEARCH THIS

AND REPORT WHAT YOU FIND.)

## **REQUIREMENTS**

Your seven- to eight-page paper should be double-spaced and written in 12-point type. It should be free of spelling, grammar and usage errors. Points will be deducted if your paper does not meet these requirements.

## **TOPIC OPTIONS**

You may select from one of the following campaigns or another of your choosing. (Instructor approval required.)

### **Henry Morrison Flagler promotes Florida**

Never mind pitching the Poconos - the founding father of travel and tourism PR turned a muggy, mosquito-infested swamp into vacation paradise. At the turn of the 20th century, Florida rail and hotel owner Henry Morrison Flagler hired a New York firm to convince Americans of the merits of visiting the east coast of Florida, ultimately establishing the tradition of the Florida Vacation. As Helen Ostrowski said, "This campaign took incredible PR savvy at a time when Americans were being attracted to the beauties of the American West, and the mysteries of more exotic destinations abroad."

### **Ed Bernays' campaign for the Ballet**

Russe Ed Bernays once said, "Those who manipulate the unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government, which is the true ruling power of our country. Using now-common PR techniques for the first time, the father of PR built a following for Russian ballet in the middle of WWI. In a time when ballet was considered a scandalous form of entertainment, Bernays used magazine placement, created a publicity guide, and used overseas reviews to make men in tights respectable, and put ballerina dreams into the heads of little girls.

### **Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade**

For the past 75 years, Americans across the country have witnessed hundred-foot helium balloons of cartoon characters floating among Manhattan skyscrapers and Rockettes tap dancing in Herald Square, thanks to a publicity campaign so successful that it is recognized by many as the official kickoff to the holiday shopping season. "The Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade is a great, family-oriented annual event that has built awareness and recognition for the Macy's brand," said Jon Weisberg.

### **Olympic Torch Relay**

The IOC understood that strong symbols and high visibility are key to great PR, and have created an emblem that is arguably the

most recognizable in the world. The Torch Relay program, executed in the months before the Winter and Summer Games, has generated publicity for the Olympics, the runners, and sponsors on a global stage since 1936. Jon Weisberg says, "It is a highly visible event that consistently delivers a straightforward message about an international ideal."

### **March of Dimes**

Way back in 1938, PR pro Carl Byoir was leveraging celebrity in an innovative fundraising campaign for a healthcare institution that's still around today. Established in 1938 by polio survivor FDR, the March of Dimes was originally part of a larger PR movement to eradicate the virus. Radio celebrities encouraged Americans to mail dimes to the President on his birthday, and the campaign raised \$268,000 in its first year. "The March of Dimes has been consistently innovative in its determined PR efforts to keep the nation focused not only on polio as a foe of children, but on other problems such as birth defects, prevention of mental retardation, and sickle cell anemia, said Wes Pedersen.

### **Lucky Strike Green Has Gone to War**

While many anti-smoking campaigns that have resulted in heavy fines for tobacco companies, one of the greatest PR campaigns actually contributed to the popularity of cigarettes. The campaign, which publicized the redesign of Lucky Strike's packaging, is now known as one that made smoking fashionable among women. The patriotic and annoyingly repetitive ad campaign got so much negative attention, that American Tobacco Company president George Hill celebrated that it would live in infamy. Few PR or advertising campaigns have been so successful, for such negative reasons.

### **Martin Luther King Jr.'s Civil Rights Campaign**

Every PR pro knows that good speechwriting and delivery are essential tools to a successful campaign, and few would argue that they have ever been better used than in Martin Luther King Jr.'s 1963 civil rights campaign - which is to say nothing of this great man's letter-writing skills, lobbying, or ability to stage effective nonviolent protests. King proved that powerful words and persuasive grassroots campaigning can turn a powerful idea into a reality.

### **NASA**

Openness toward the media and a close relationship with the US government have been NASA's best PR assets from the start. Ever since Houston's Johnson Space Center director Chris Kraft insisted that television cameras be placed on the lunar lander in 1969 and reporters invited inside mission control during the Apollo 13 mission, the public has closely witnessed NASA activities - both awe-inspiring and tragic alike. Those historic moments have helped the public overlook the huge taxpayer expenses and numerous technical debacles that could otherwise have jeopardized the future of the organization.

### **Cabbage Patch Kids**

PR efforts that led up to the national launch of the Cabbage Patch Kids created hysteria among the media, kids, and parents looking to get their hands on the elusive adoptable dolls. The PR efforts set a standard for the creation of a toy fad on this scale. "An early example of how to create a 'must have' toy, the Cabbage Patch craze was a great product concept, well executed through a strong media program," said Helen Ostrowski.

### **Traffic Safety**

Now In the 1980s, the US automotive industry saved lives and got the nation to buckle up entirely through PR and lobbying for better safety-belt laws - no advertising was used. Tactics included winning the support of the news media across the country, interactive displays, celebrity endorsements, letter-writing campaigns, and several publicity events, like buckling a 600-foot-wide safety belt around the Hollywood sign. The results of one of the biggest public information campaigns of all time were phenomenal, with the number of people 'buckling up' rising from 12% to 50% - it is now even higher.

### **Hands Across America**

The largest human gathering in history was a PR stunt that saw everyone from bikers to Boy Scouts and ball players come together for a worthy cause in a huge show of support orchestrated through media outreach by Weber Shandwick. On May 26, 1986, more than 7 million people, including President Ronald Reagan, joined hands in a human chain across sixteen states to raise money for the hungry and homeless in the United States. The campaign produced a music video that premiered during the Super Bowl, reaching millions more.

### **StarKist Tuna**

When negative coverage threatened the tuna industry because dolphins were getting caught in fishermen's nets, Edelman and H.J. Heinz's StarKist led the way in changing fishing practices, with conferences, videos, and an Earth Day coalition. Eighty-four percent of the public heard about the efforts, and StarKist was praised as an environmental leader. This campaign was not just about changing perception, but about changing reality, with commercial tuna fishermen everywhere following StarKist's lead.

### **Tylenol crisis**

When PRWeek asked PR pros around the country what they thought was the best campaign of all time, the Tylenol crisis garnered more votes than any other - proof positive that it has become the classic model for a product withdrawal. When Johnson & Johnson discovered that several people had died from cyanide-laced Tylenol capsules, a national panic erupted, and many

thought that the company would never recover from the damage caused by the tamperings. Tylenol's PR pros ignored short-term profit losses, and issued a complete recall of the product, ultimately becoming a leader in the redesign of medicinal packaging. Using strong publicity and coupons to win back consumers, they strengthened both market share and consumer relations for Tylenol. Betsy Plank called it "the classic case history of contemporary PR at its ethical best."

### **Windows 95 Launch**

In the pantheon of modern product launches, Microsoft's Windows 95 invaded the minds of the American public and consumed the media, resulting in an unprecedented 99% awareness level among all audiences before the product even hit store shelves. For a short time, media coverage of the product outpaced the OJ Simpson trial, which was no small feat in 1995.

### **Understanding AIDS**

Arguably the most successful health-education campaign ever, the national AIDS mailing "Understanding AIDS changed the way the disease was perceived by Americans, and caused a sexual revolution. Dictated by the US Congress in 1987, the Ogilvy PR campaign also included grassroots activities that specifically targeted Black and Hispanic Americans in order to curb the epidemic's spread.

### **Making BP beyond**

British Petroleum is currently enjoying success that runs counter to most trends in the energy market, and much of that is due to a repositioning that started with this impressive internal branding campaign. BP's 1999 global initiative defined the brand as innovative and environmentally aware, while building confidence, performance, and unity among the company's several thousand employees. The corporation's work with Ogilvy has set a standard for post-merger internal branding exercises that many will seek to match.

### **Human Genome Project**

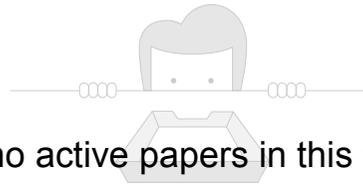
It's not difficult to get publicity for a controversial scientific discovery, but with a lot of preparation, an early press conference, and some excellent education programs, the PR pros at the Whitehead Institute made sure that the complicated science of the human genome project was not lost in politics and scandal. At the time, the media was focused on the gene-sequencing race and the debate over cloning. Rarely has such complex science been made so accessible to the masses. Helen Ostrowski said, "this could have easily become a focus of controversy. Instead, it was a testimony to our scientific prowess."

Sample topics excerpted from: <http://www.prweek.com/article/1234145/greatest-campaigns-ever-200-year-old-publicity->

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