

Critical analysis of a pr campaign

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



Abstract

The value of the public relations campaign has become a topic of substantial debate. This essay assesses the role of the process and the value it has in today's business world. With the evidence presented showing that there can be value found in a well-executed PR strategy, the Queensland 2009 project illustrates the pros and cons. This work will be of value to any researcher evaluating the nature of public relations.

1 Introduction

Public relations and the capacity to effectively communicate a concept or idea to the general public has become a science in the modern world (Macnamara, 2010). The converse argument that some utilize is that companies should not have to create a campaign to sell a good product, has also been used to limited effect (Goeldner and Ritchie, 2003). The role of public relations (PR) campaigns in the business world has continued to gain prominence as increased technology allows companies to reach entirely new markets (Ryan, and Jones, 2011). This essay examines the Tourism Queensland promotion of the Great Barrier Reef in 2009 in an effort to develop an understanding of the strengths and detriments of the approach. Widely regarded as being one of the more effective PR campaigns in modern history, this example illustrates the power and impact that a well-considered strategy can have.

2 Public Relations Campaign

2. 1 Background

The Tourism Australia website suggests that the Tourism Queensland 2009 “Best Job in the World” is one of the most successful public relations campaign in the world (Australia, 2014). Others cite the spectacle overshadowing the product in relation to this campaign (Macnamara, 2010). The Queensland campaign had a goal of developing an innovative method of promoting their destinations, while at the same time aligning market activity through all international markets (Simon, 2014). There was a need for the company to inspire a large population to become interested enough to try the associated services offered by the company. Specifically targeted at a adventuresome demographic, the campaign offered jobs in exotic regions to six lucky winners (Australia, 2014). Appealing directly to the exotic nature of the offered job by placing appealing phrases including ‘Clean the Pool and Collect the Fish’ to describe the duties involved in the jobs, served to stir the imagination of the target population (Sweeney, 2009). Adhering to a basic principle of tourism, that there must be a unique offering in order to stoke interest, the Queensland campaign offered a rare chance for employment in a desirable environment (Goeldner et al, 2010). It was noted that the caretaker option enticed tens of thousands of applicants to apply (Sweeney, 2009). Not only was there a widespread and positive response, the contest style of the application served to instil a sense of chance and rarity which increased stoked interest. Yet, others noted the increase in management cost that this process imposed on the business (Macnamara, 2010). This choice of presentation indicates that the campaign was successful due to the manner of enticement. Obstacles coupled with the psychological challenge

represented by the remote nature of the experience created a novel opportunity that many individuals found appealing.

By targeting the adventurers, the Queensland campaign provoked international interest (Sweeney, 2009). This supports the research assumption that a large population would be interested in this brand of employment. This broad appeal served to build an advertising platform that could be utilized to entice those that are not lucky enough to be chosen for the six positions advertised (Macnamara, 2010). Another factor that benefited the campaign was found in the way the campaign used word-of-mouth to become known. This manner of inexpensive advertisement cost very little, yet provided a wealth of contacts that offered further revenue potential..

The campaign also generated interest in the media, thus providing further opportunities for promotion (Sweeney, 2009). With another addition of low cost advertising, this evidence suggests that the benefit to the the scope of advertising and operations will very likely offset any adverse financial or social impacts. The Queensland campaign provided a story line that everyone around the world could watch with interest (Simon, 2014). Utilizing a simplistic approach that appealed to wide range of demographics, the campaign successfully communicated with their target audience.

2. 2 Key issues

A prize that most people wanted was at the heart of the Queensland PR campaign (Sweeney, 2009). The chance to obtain not just a free vacation,

but a new life, a chance to walk the beaches and sit in the sun and get paid for it was impossibility for many people (Australia, 2014). The Sweeney (2009) evidence illustrates that the strategy was to stimulate interest in the campaign by speaking directly to the dreamer in each person. This capacity to evoke a wish in the minds of the consumer seems to be equaled by the parallel interest espoused by the media and those that wish to actually vacation in the area.

The Queensland campaign felt that it was of primary interest to evoke a global interest in their properties through the PR effort (Simon, 2014). By utilizing the form of competition to secure a ‘dream job’ the company offered an image that could be translated beyond the possible job, and into the realm of potential vacation. Utilizing a straightforward approach allowed for easy communication for every demographic (Sweeney, 2009).

With five key areas including launch, application, and shortlisting and voting, application section and employment there was a comprehensive effort to maximize the exposure (Simon, 2014). Every stage of this campaign was focused on effectively communicating the message to the largest group at the least cost. By combining different incentives the campaign capitalized on free media coverage to accomplish their goals of worldwide exposure.

Audience targeting plays a prominent role in any effective public relations campaign (Grunig, 2013). This facet of a campaign allows the marketing efforts to be directed at a specific group in order to make the most of the project. In this case, the target audience was deemed to be relevant to the industry through the placement of the ads foremost, as well as the language

used in the ads (Sweeney, 2009). Phrases including words that conjured images of relaxation and relative ease attracted a large number of people interested in finding an exotic method of working, something that lay substantially outside the norm, idyllic. With attractive phrasing including options such as ‘ feed the fish’ or clean the pool, there was a defined perception of tropical ease at work, which in turn served to spur continued interest in the campaign (Australia, 2014). This avenue generated great interest by the nature of the target population’s inherent inclinations. The evidence suggests that the short term goal of attracting a person that was looking for relaxing work, very close to the variety of vacations the company offered to consumers, offered the dual capacity of attracting possible customers as well as employees. Not only did this outreach to the target population succeed in drawing large numbers, this seems to illustrate that many of the respondents found vacation opportunities with the company, which in turn served to substantially boost the company’s revenue stream, brand and exposure during this period. There is a clear linkage between the message of seeking employees and the consistent message of selling packages to prospective consumers which is an integral component of a many successful PR campaigns (Biocca, 2013).

The deft implementation of the Queensland campaign recognized the target audience, and better still, was able to reach this population utilizing attractive messaging (Biocca, 2013). Appealing to the very basic wants and needs of the prospective target market compelled many of the most unlikely people to apply for this job, which was a good element that generated interest. The single word emblazoned in ad “ Explore” with the only requisite

to report back was enough to spur a massive wave of interest across the adventure seekers of the world (Sweeney, 2009: 1). The capacity to build a narrative, a form of contest around the employment message, served as a key element of the continued success of the project (Cutlip, 2013). The centre of the campaign was through building an instrument that served to inspire the imagination with questions including “ could this be your dream?” (Sweeney, 2014: 1). With the high technology facet of the campaign, the strategy to incorporate social media was deemed a success by the media, winning recognition and awards, that served to drive associated attention to a frenzy (Australia, 2014). This suggests that the campaign set out to capitalize on the spectacle of the job hunt process in order to spread the word on the media front, which in turn spurred more applications. The contest style design of the application process allowed for a wide range of creativity that served to further appeal to the target populations, or those that wished to find something outside the ordinary (Biocca, 2013). This component allowed for a contest format, which offered inclusion in the sense that even those that could not win the job itself could take part. This form of advertising that contained different methods of appealing to consumers served to spread the word of the vacation opportunities to an entirely new population, serving the needs of the company at a minimal cost (Grunig, 2013).

A key element that was fundamental to the success of the Queensland campaign rests in the capacity for any adventurous person, regardless of station, location, sex or limitation could apply (Australia, 2014). This element widened the range which meant that every person associated with the

campaign had a visual of themselves on an exotic locale, doing a dream job. The ad made use of issues including elements of equality that commonly considered every participant “ The PR element was the enormous coverage, online and offline, it generated and the direct engagement the campaign made with consumers.” (Sweeney, 2009: 1). This statement illustrates the components came together from a well-planned strategy that resulted in the wide spread use of social media in the drive to spread the campaign to every possible person.

Modern technology has greatly enhanced the capacity for a well-planned public relations strategy to reach the consumer for a minimal cost (Ryan et al, 2011). In the case of the Queensland campaign, the technological world served to benefit their advertising in critical methods, including the transmission of video clips and the availability of these ads to be shared among outlets including Facebook (Grunig, 2013). With the very first low cost ad that featured a web page that pointed the way to further information, the Queensland strategy capitalized on the need for low cost solutions that placed a value on the product and not the delivery, thereby keeping attention on the company. The attraction of the dream job fuelled a rapid rise of people that were aware of the campaign just from the efforts of the social media world (Macnamara, 2010). Further, once this group of consumers was connected to the parent company, online, there was every opportunity for further promotions targeting the same group. This suggests that even as the initial campaign grew,, some of the most valuable information was the long term consumer list that has the potential to fuel future sales for the company. Social media enables this message to reach a

wide range of people across all spectrums in every nation on earth (Pomering, 2013).

Another component that became a key component of the Queensland PR campaign success was the combination of social media, consumer interest and a contest including the acquisition of votes in order to not only stoke but sustain interest (Sweeney, 2012). Social media made this form of contest possible, with the dreamers fuelling the desire to see it happen if not to them then to someone they could relate to. Once again, the campaign appealed to the target market in a manner that they could relate to with a message that they could understand. This has served to provide Queensland with a sustained and widely popular brand that is associated with innovation and trying new concepts (Australia, 2014).

2. 3 Effectiveness

The Queensland PR campaign has been deemed successful and innovative by a wide variety of professionals and advertisers around the world (Pomering, 2013). The simple style, coupled with the psychological incentives combined to surpass company expectations. The implementation of low cost solution to high cost problems propelled this campaign forward. As evidence of their overall success, the Queensland Company claims the campaign has changed the face of global advertising in a positive manner (Australia, 2014). This point has a clear impact on the manner in which other modern operations are conducted. With numbers that are hard to dispute, the amount of interest generated by free media coverage alone provides a compelling appeal to the approach.

3 Conclusion

This essay examined the Tourism Queensland promotion of the Great Barrier Reef in 2009 in an effort to develop a deeper appreciation of the benefits and detriments of the approach. The research illustrated that it was the simple, direct, novel and innovative approach the Queensland PR campaign that utilized the exotic locale and attractiveness of rare employment, alongside the simple principles of timing and effective communication to sustain the interest of entire global population. There was a direct a lasting outreach to a targeted market of adventurers using social media that resulted in a growing wave of interest that created media attention and further exposure. Building on this reaction was the contest application method that publicized the lucky winner, and continued to follow the person after the job. As a result of this strategy the company experienced free media coverage, a wide base for extended communication and an overall improvement of their brand image. Further, this able utilization of assets on hand was accomplished at a minimal cost with maximum effect.

In the end the Queensland PR campaign of 2009 showcased what can happen when a company can tap into the dreams of a population, as well as the pocket book.

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