

A public sector
marketing
communications
media essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The change for life is a public sector campaign organised by the National Health Service, also known as the NHS. The main objective of the campaign is to help the government reach its goals to be “ the first major nation to reverse the rising tide of obesity and overweight in the population” (NHS, 2008). According to a report from (NHS, 2008), “ 90% of children could be overweight by 2050”. Obesity has continually been a burden to the government for years now, the direct costs of obesity per year is estimated to be £5. 1 billion (NHS, 2012).

The government recognises that it has a major role to play when it comes to dealing with obesity in the society. And that is why they have developed the Change for Life, following a report from (NHS, 2008), the government’s drive to tackle obesity is targeting five key areas using the Change for Life campaign. This includes, “ children: healthy growth and healthy weight, promoting healthier food choices, building physical activity into our lives, creating incentives for better health and personalised advice and support”.

The main target audience for the Change for Life campaign is mainly families, particularly those with children under the age of 11 years. The government tends to focus mainly on the children on the reason that it will help them achieve the goal of reducing child obesity by 2020 (NHS, 2009). To get the new message of healthy eating and exercising across to the people in the society, the governments used different promotional tools.

The advertising is set to become personal and show people that making a change to their lifestyle for example changing to healthier snacks options, cutting back on fat, reducing salts in their food and being more active can

help them live longer(NHS, 2008). In other words, the advertising will be encouraging people to take action and join in the race to fight obesity. In an attempt to influence people on understanding the importance of taking responsibility to live a better and healthier life, a television advert was produced.

Through the television advert, the governments were able to stress out how much people should start making changes to their health and highlighted where support and advice can be found. Although this media platform might have been useful in getting the campaign message across to the target audience, it can also have its barriers or noise issues. This includes, the target audience neglecting the information provided, as they might not be at home when the advert is been aired on television or the station might be changed by the target audience, as they might prefer to watch something else other than the advert.

Furthermore, the Change for life road show is part of the marketing strategy the government have set up to influence more people to change their diet. In these road shows, they draw the attention of people by creating fun and exciting games for families to take part on, giving out leaflets, providing support and advice on healthy diets. Through this, they are able to influence the unhealthy lifestyles of these target audience. The noise issue of this method might be the fact that not all families might be present on the location where the road show is taking place and others might not be interested in waiting to see what is happening, as they just want to get their shopping done and go home.

Also, the campaign was advertised on local newspapers, this might have been a cheaper option to get a vast number of people to respond to campaign by making changes to their eating habit but the issue is that not all of these people might read newspapers. There are huge competitions from the internet edition of the same newspaper, so people might choose to read it online and if the advert is not available on the online version, this means that it will have no real effect in delivering the information to the target audience.

The government have made it easily accessible for the families to get support and advice on living a healthier diet. There are information on healthier food options, drinks, snacks and exercise activity available at the Change for Life website. Also, the government have been able to reach a vast number of its target audience using social networking sites. They communicate with their audiences daily by posting various activities and providing cooking tips for healthy meal on their page. For example, most of the comments on the Facebook page are about how the supports provided by the governments have helped them change their diets.

The campaign made use of animations and simple messages such as “ Eat well, Move More and Live Longer” (NHS, 2009). The whole idea was to make it more memorable, as the target audience will easily understand the message the government is trying to deliver to them using different promotional mix. For example, a spokesperson from the Department of Health stated that “ the very nature of communicating to the public on an issue like obesity means that we have to put complex information in a simple, brief form so everybody can understand it” (Telegraph, 2009a). The <https://assignbuster.com/a-public-sector-marketing-communications-media-essay/>

targets for the campaign was to get “ 1. 5million responses from at-risk families”, 200, 000 of those respondents converted to a healthy lifestyle (NHS, 2009). This indicates that the Change for Life campaign has gotten through to the minds of the targets audience such that they have been able to seek help and advice to change their diet.

Although, the campaign has been effective, the drawback has been the fact that the government has focused solely on families neglecting to support other individuals such as teenagers, adults and aged people, who might be at risk of getting obese. Also, it's known that obesity is clearly at the forefront of the Change for Life campaign but the message been delivered through the advertisement has proven otherwise. The campaign used all manner of euphemisms instead of obesity. For example, one of the television ad states that “ one day we woke up and realised that 9 out of 10 of our kids would grow up to have dangerous amounts of fat built up in their bodies’ (Piggin and Lee, 2011).

The fact that the government is not emphasising on the threat of obesity is raising questions in the media. The Chief Executives of the Taxpayers’ Alliance, Matthew Elliot, stated in his own words that: “ This advertising campaign is money down the drain. A shop would not spend millions on advertising without mentioning the goods they sold, so you had expected a campaign against obesity to mention obesity” (Telegraph, 2009b). If the government are trying to save the lives of these target audience, it is reasonable for them to be informed of the consequences of their unhealthy lifestyle instead of the government avoiding it for fear of making a

judgement of people's health and "stigmatising children" (Telegraph, 2009b).

In the case of the private sector campaign, Coca-Cola has recently launched an anti-obesity campaign called "Coming Together" in America. The campaign is targeted at the whole nation compare to the Change for Life campaign which focuses on families. Coca-Cola believes that everyone is at the risk of getting obese and as such they have launched this campaign to contribute in the fight against obesity in America. For instance, in 2012, the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention reported that "35.7% of adults and 16.9% of children aged 2-19years are obese" (Reuters, 2012).

In the same way, the marketing objectives of the Change for Life campaign focuses on tackling obesity, so also is that of Coca-Cola. The company strategy is to introduce a variety of moves that helps address obesity such as providing diet options (Telegraph, 2013). To acknowledge this new movement by Coca Cola, the company produced a two minutes television advert addressing the issue of growing obesity in the nation (BBC, 2013). In the advert, its states how the company is making relevant changes to ensure that they help the government, communities in the fight against obesity by reducing the calories in their beverages. For example, in the advert its states that coca cola has voluntarily replaced fizzy drinks in schools to juices, water, low and no-calories drink options (BBC, 2013).

Also, the company noted in the advert that they are working with scientist and nutritionist to make better low-calories sweeteners to improve their drinks and stresses out that it offers 180 low and no-calorie beverages out of

more than 650 beverage products in its product brands(CNN, 2013). The advert was aired during the highest rated television stations; this includes CNN, Fox News and MSNBC. This indicates how determined coca cola is to get the message across to a wider audience knowing that those stations are the most watched stations in America.

Also, using television advert means that the company not only talk about their plans but also demonstrate how the company have an important role in reducing the complex case of obesity in America. But this form of promotional means can become a problem when people would rather do something else like watch a movie rather than watch the news. This means that the message would not get through to this audience and Coca Cola is missing out in the opportunity to get the attention of these individuals regarding their plans to stop people getting obese.

Through this campaign, Coca Cola have proven to people that they are ready to take responsibility in reducing the damage caused by their sugary beverages in the lives of their customers. For instance, Barry Popkins, a nutritionist at the University of North Carolina noted that “ The Coca-Cola Company still remains one of the major causes of obesity in the USA and globally”(USAToday, 2013).

Unlike the Change for Life campaign which refuses to address the threats of obesity, Coca- Cola has done the opposite. The company noted in the television adverts that if people take in more calories than they are burning off, they will gain weight. In this instance, Coca cola has disclose the problem and given the solution at the same time. This involves keeping fit like

running as seen in adverts, as people would realise that they have to take necessary actions by joining sport groups and taking part in activities that will help them burn out those fats in their body, giving them less chance of becoming obese.

However, the campaign is only aimed at the Americans and this should be expanded to other countries in the world. People in these countries have also got more chance of getting obese from their daily intake of the high calories contained in these beverages produced by Coca Cola. Targeting the US communities and neglecting other parts of the world is not reasonable and is unfair to people living in other countries.

Also, as interpreted in the advert, Coca Cola states that calories found in a can of Coke is no worse than any others. Coca Cola is known for its high calories content and trying to cover this up by comparing it to other food and drink content is contradicting the message the company is trying to deliver using the campaign. Studies have proven high consumption of sugary drinks result to obesity and for Coca Cola to be comparing their calories with other food shows that they are trying to pretend to be part of the solution of obesity rather than the problem.

In recommendation to the both campaign, Coca Cola should focus more on getting their message across to a wider audience by launching the same campaign in other countries instead of just the USA. This will help encourage more people worldwide to take responsibility in making changes to their health and eventually this can result to a low death rate caused by obesity. Also, it will help decline the obesity rate in children and adults all over the

world. At the moment, the campaign is mainly promoted using television advert and online, the company should focus more on using more promotional tool on a wider scale, as less advertising results to the message reaching less people in the population.

Also, the company should sponsor more health and activity initiatives in different communities, as this will encourage more people to keep active and eat well.

In the case of the Change for life campaign, the government should point out to people the danger of what they are doing to their health by living irresponsibly on things like fizzy drinks and junk food. More promotional methods such as sales promotion, for example, giving out free vouchers can encourage more people to change their diet. Also, they should focus on other targets audience rather than just families, as everyone is at risk of getting obese.

In conclusion, the Coca Cola and Change for Life campaigns aims to achieve one main goal, which is to reduce obesity by encouraging more people to change their diets by eating healthy and exercising. These have been promoted using different publicity means such as television advertising, newspaper, online etc. The aim of this is to get their message across to the target audiences, so they can all join in the fight against obesity by complying with the support the campaign is providing for them.

LIST OF REFERENCES

BBC (2013) Coca-Cola addresses obesity in TV advert [Online] available from [12/02/2013]
<https://assignbuster.com/a-public-sector-marketing-communications-media-essay/>

CNN (2013) Coca-Cola weighs in on obesity fight [Online] available from [12/02/2013]

National Health Service (2008) Help stop childhood obesity before it starts [Online] available from [14/02/2013]

National Health Service (2009) Change4Life Marketing Strategy, In Support of Health Weight, Healthy Lives [Online] available from [15/02/2013]

National Health Service (2012) Statistics on obesity, physical activity and diet: England, 2012 [Online] available from [15/02/2013]

Piggin, J., and Lee, J. (2011) ' Don't mention obesity': Contradictions and tensions in the UK Change4Life health promotion campaign [Online] available from < <http://hpq.sagepub.com/content/16/8/1151.full.pdf+html> > [15/02/2013]

Reuters (2012) Fat and getting fatter: U. S. obesity rates to soar by 2030 [Online] available from < <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/09/18/us-obesity-us-idUSBRE88H0RA20120918> > [14/02/2013]

Telegraph (2009a) Obesity campaign to be changed due to bullying charge [Online] available from [13/02/2013]

Telegraph (2009b) Anti-obesity adverts don't mention the word obese [Online] available from [13/02/2013]

Telegraph (2013) Coca-Cola makes ridiculous bid to jump on the anti-obesity bandwagon [Online] available from [14/02/2013]

USAToday (2013) Critics attack Coke's anti-obesity ad [Online] available from [14/02/2013]