

Project

Awareness campaign for dark chocolate as product category

Category

PR – Marketing communications/advertising

Submitted/performed by

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Objective

- Raise awareness among consumers, manufacturers and interest groups about chocolate, its benefits and its moderate consumption;
- Introduce dark chocolate as a suitable foodstuff in everyday diet;
- Endorse the reputation of the Estonian Food Industry Association as a progressive organisation that stands for its members and their clients.

Budget for the project

Total budget (incl. advertising campaign, media platforms and PR activities) was approximately 30,000 euros.

Brief introduction to the campaign

In 2012, the Estonian Food Industry Association organised an awareness campaign for dark chocolate, which primarily aimed to bring awareness to target groups about the benefits and reasonable consumption of dark chocolate. In 2013, the Estonian Food Industry Association decided to organise a follow-up campaign to promote dark chocolate as a product category that would raise and cement people's awareness of dark chocolate even further.

Strategy

The strategic starting point was to use all opportunities of regular and social media in an integrated way. The advertising campaign focused on TV advertising, and information was distributed on the campaign website and *Tükike tumedat* (Piece of dark) Facebook page. The PR-strategy focused on the following:

- Regular media – sharing information via publications and messages based on the specifics of the target group about the benefits of dark chocolate, advisability of its consumption and combining it daily with other foodstuffs;
- Social media – generating interest and sharing additional information about chocolate as a delicious, enjoyable and beneficial treat through raffles, references and media coverage;
- Press event – as a central activity of the PR-campaign we planned a press event that would look attractive and would focus the media on the topic, thus supporting the whole course of the campaign. Compared to 2012, it was important in terms of media to find an attractive focal point to the dark chocolate press event and come up with innovative messages;
- PR message – consuming a reasonable amount of dark chocolate is good for the health or “Piece of dark is good for you”, which gives content to the messages used in the advertising campaign. The follow-up campaign brought up a new topic of combining dark chocolate as a healthy foodstuff with other foodstuffs;

- Sirje Potisepp, the Director of the Estonian Food Industry Association, continued to act as the spokesperson for the PR-activities as she did in the 2012 campaign; we also selected the charismatic nutrition expert Raivo Vokk and beloved chef Angelica Udeküll to serve as new spokespersons.

Tactics

PR-activities were clearly planned based on the specifics of each channel and publication:

- Stage I: Initiating media coverage and proposing the topic to November magazines (magazines targeting women, food publications, health magazines) and organising a press event to bring attention to the follow-up campaign at the end of October 2013 (aimed both at health, lifestyle and food publications and news media);
- Stage II: Continuous and thought-out information flow in national regular media (radio and TV talk shows, consumer columns, online and print media; approaching and testing the topic in magazines) and opinion pieces in regional media. Throughout the campaign also ensuring continuous information flow on Facebook and organising special projects (raffle on the Sky Plus morning programme, contribution to Selver's Jõulukiri (Christmas magazine)).

Results and cost efficiency of the project

- The opening event of the campaign turned out to be a successful media event: a total of **39 media representatives attended the press morning** (27 media representatives in 2012; we predicted a maximum of 20 for the follow-up campaign).
- The awareness campaign **was featured in the media approximately 70 times** (14 in TV and radio, 35 in magazines and newspapers and 20 in online channels), which was more than during the first year of the campaign.
- The effectiveness of the campaign is also reflected in the increase of sales volumes – the market leader Kalev reported **an increase in the sale of dark chocolate** during the period from November 2013 to January 2014 **17% in comparison to the previous year**; sales increase for the second largest market participant Fazer for the same period was 11%. **Nielsen reported a total of 11.6% increase in the sale of dark chocolate** in 2013 compared to 2012.
- The campaign was endorsed by the Facebook page, which ensured continuous traffic and interest through regular postings and daily prize raffles. The follow-up campaign increased the number of fans on the page **from 362 to 5,467**. The raffle brought us **6,700 app users and 32,410 friend invitations**.
- The budget for carrying out the project's PR-activities was small at around 3,000 euros during the two month campaign period. The **efficiency (ROI)** of activities achieved as part of this **was very high**.

Assessment of the creativity and originality of the solution

- We based the initiation and proposal of topics on the specifics of each publication and on making sure that the proposed topic does not repeat the previous year;
- Specifying the topic and recruiting new charismatic and expert spokespersons, whose cooperation helped us to “extract” novel nuances for the media from chocolate, contributed to the success of the follow-up campaign;
- We organised the press event in the format of a workshop, which enabled the participants to discuss the topics with spokespersons directly, find fresh information for their publications and try interesting food combinations on the site;
- Well thought-out and attractive Facebook solution helped to increase the audience through social media alongside regular media even further – the FB page

accumulated a large number of supporters, who cheered the campaign on, offered their opinions and experiences and shared information about dark chocolate with their circle of friends;

- Despite the fact that the follow-up campaign raised serious questions about the newsworthiness of the topic and media interest, it is evident in the results of the campaign that the chosen strategy and tactics justified themselves.