

I Have Nothing Down There. What About You?
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1. Entrant's Name: Ula Spindler
2. Title of Entry: »I have nothing down there. What about you?«
3. Division, Category and Sub-category: Communication Management/Category 13:
Economic, social and environmental
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Services
4. Entrant's organization: Pristop d.o.o.
5. Client organization: Pliva Ljubljana d.o.o.
6. Time Period of Project: April 2004 - November 2004
7. Brief description:

In 2004, we have in cooperation with our client Pliva designed a socially responsible action, with which we wanted to bring closer to the Slovenian general public the Croatian pharmaceutical company Pliva. The action, named "I have nothing down there. What about you?", should draw the attention of the Slovenian youth to the sexually transmitted disease chlamydeous, which represents an urgent problem in Slovenia and all over the world. Not much has been said about the disease in Slovenia, neither in the media nor in the public. The number of infected young people in Slovenia is increasing daily. Pliva has decided to donate one month of free testing for chlamydeous infection to the Slovenian youth. Our task was very concrete - successfully support the action through communication, place the topic of chlamydeous infection on the media agendas and attain positive media publicity for the client. The action turned out to be very successful, since we have exceeded every expectation as regards media publicity, we have launched a wave of media reports about chlamydeous infection and the attendance of testing exceeded the anticipated by almost 130 %.

1. Need/Opportunity

Pliva Ljubljana is a subsidiary of the Croatian pharmaceutical company Pliva, Joint Stock Company, and is confronted with serious competition from domestic and foreign pharmaceutical companies. These pharmaceutical companies have at their disposal high budgets for communications (for public relations as well as market communication), while Pliva manages its strategic communication with intended audiences with very modest budgetary means. Next to that, Pliva is also in a difficult position from the point of view of visibility and reputation on the Slovenian market, since it was not actively present with communication programs and actions in the last 10 years (since the secession of Slovenia from Yugoslavia). Therefore, Pliva is not very well known among the general public and among the media. The professional public knows Pliva as a professionally reliable partner, but other pharmaceutical companies are stronger. Due to the fact that Pliva is not well known and has a worse reputation in Slovenia, Pliva decided for a more proactive communication in 2004. Of course, budgetary means were still very limited. Therefore, Pliva's communication strategies must be well considered, creative and above all they must fill in the narrow gap in the communication of other pharmaceutical companies. This represented a special challenge and offered opportunities for us to:

- Position Pliva as a socially responsible company, which cares about our young people,
- Position Pliva as a company, which was the first to address the problem of chlamydeous infection in Slovenia,
- Gain positive media publicity,
- Create positive publicity not merely in specialized media, but also in general/national and life-style media,
- Communicate to the Slovenian general public that Pliva is a reliable and professional partner, which offers us security and above all health.

2. Intended Audience(s):

The communication program was designed for communication with the media, general public, mostly younger (from 16 to 24), and professional (medical) public. Our attention was predominantly dedicated to the media and general public.

The key characteristics of the intended audiences:

1. Media:

- Pliva mostly appears in the general media as a foreign brand, which does not occupy a lot of media space. At the same time, many negative publications were recorded on the operations of Pliva, on the drop in the share price and on the fall of the patent for antibiotic Sumamed.
- In lifestyle media Pliva hardly appears at all, which means that end-users only get partial information about Pliva's projects, development achievements, and new products.
- Our main targets were national, life-style and entertainment media, which would position Pliva as a pharmaceutical company in our everyday life. The main characteristic of the national and life-style media is that they hardly ever cover topics about Pliva thus communication toward them was very honest, open and soft. Through the national/life-style/family media we wanted to inform as many young people and their parents as possible about the free testing for chlamydeous infection and thus communicate softer and generous. The media, which were included into all the communication moments of the project, were of special importance to us.

2. General public:

- In the communication project "I have nothing down there. What about you?" we focused on two target groups of the general public (1) **youth**, aged between 16 and 24, which represents the group with highest probability for chlamydeous infection and are mostly also the carriers of the infection and (2) **parents**, who warn and direct their children to free testing.
- The Slovenian general public mostly reads national and life-style media and likes to watch relaxing TV broadcasts. The best way to reach young people in Slovenia is through a creative use of the media, since they mostly do not read national newspapers. Thus, in our action we tried to surprise them with the use of alternative media, which would be interesting and alluring for them.
- Our goal was to reach as many Slovenians as possible. We informed the general audience about the project mostly through the media, but we also used some more attractive tools of communication like advertising on toilets, waiter aprons in trendy bars, stands in front of faculties.

3. Professional (medical) audience:

- The professional public like doctors and gynecologists were of special importance for the project as well, since they were a credible source of information for the general public, which was for the first time more explicitly acquainted with chlamydeous infection. We had to establish real communication with doctors, warn them on time about the action (we have also attained the license of the medical ethics' committee that the action was acceptable and desired) and ask them for their assistance in the carrying out of the act - informing people about the disease and the way of testing.

3. Goals and Objectives:

The main goal of the project was to allure at least 1.000 young people to visit the free testing in one month (from 15 October to 15 November 2004).

The project's main goal was:

- to strengthen the position of Pliva as a pharmaceutical innovator and a commercially successful company,
- to stimulate publicity,
- to create and sustain personal relationships with key journalists and to build alliances with the key journalists.
- to soften Pliva's position in the eyes of the media in the terms of availability and openness to the media, professionalism and competency in its field.

The following objectives were set:

- **Media:**
 - At least 10 articles, where Pliva would be mentioned as the sponsor and mentor of free testing for chlamydeous infection,
 - At least 10 articles, where the issue of **chlamydeous infection** is addressed,
 - At least 1.000 tests for **chlamydeous infection**.

- **General audience:** to increase awareness about the chlamydeous infection, invite young people to free testing, organized by Pliva, position Pliva as a reliable partner, which takes care of the Slovenian youth.
- **Medical professional audience:** we wanted to present Pliva to the professional public as a competent partner and an attentive medicine manufacturer, which does not merely want to increase its sales, but also care for the social environment and healthy development of young people in this environment.

4. Solution Overview:

The main intentions of the sponsorship action was to acquaint young people with the most spread sexually transmitted chlamydeous infection and encourage them to consider the dangers of unprotected sex. Within the framework of the action, we enabled sexually active young people to visit the free testing for infection with the *Chlamydia trachomatis* bacteria and have thus enabled them to take care for their health on time. The action was carried out in two stages: (1) the first stage started in May 2004 and lasted until August 2004; in this phase, we have informed young people about the sexually transmitted chlamydeous infection and announced that free testing would be available in the second half of the year, (2) the second phase started in September 2004 and lasted until November 2004; in this phase we invited young people to visit the free testing for the infection with the *Chlamydia trachomatis* bacteria.

According to the data of the World Health Organization, 92 million people all over the world are infected with the *Chlamydia trachomatis* bacteria. On the basis of information, gathered with the help of a Slovenian research, they estimated that among inhabitants of Slovenia, aged between 19 and 49, approximately 15.000 men (3 %) and approximately 7.600 women (1.6 %) are infected. The estimated share of infected was the highest in the age group 18 to 24 years, namely around 4.300 men and 4.1000 women.

4.1. First phase (May - August 2004):

The first phase of the action began with a *press breakfast*, to which we invited national and life-style media. We presented the sponsorship action, its goals and intentions as well as the chlamydeous infection. We distributed the prepared material to the present media. To those, who were not able to attend the press conference, we sent the press kits. We invited to the press conference an independent expert - doctor (gynecologists), who also professionally devotes his time to research and medical treatment of the chlamydeous infection. He was a very good spokesman for the media. We informed the media about current activities through *press releases* (daily, weekly). We added special importance to the project with a *strategy of third parties*. We were successful in convincing independent professional speakers to explain the chlamydeous infection to the media and invite potential young people to undergo testing. We arranged interviews with these independent professionals, who have presented the disease and the importance of medical treatment, for chosen media. Through this, we have of course also presented Pliva's sponsorship action. We have focused above all on media, who cover the health topics and on national media respectively their columns/broadcasts on health. We also issued a special edition of Pliva's external gazette *Sreda* to the chlamydeus infection, where we made a several interviews with gynecologists; we published several articles about the chlamydeus infection etc.

Next to public relations activities, we tried with our limited budget to reach young people also through alternative communication media. The manner of advertising was light, pleasant and interesting; the visual design of advertisements was exceedingly different, alluring and interesting. The creative use of the media was the following: posters and pamphlets in health centers, distribution of pamphlets in cinemas, free cards (feliks cards) in popular bars, confectioneries and cafes. Waiters in these bars were also wearing T-shirts with the inscription "I have nothing down there. What about you?". These T-shirt were real success, the visitors of these cafes would like to have this T-shirt. A really small amount of means was earmarked for advertising in life-style magazines, which also cover health issues next to other subjects.

4.2. Second phase (September - November 2004):

In the second phase, we did not organize a meeting with journalists, but we informed the journalists with press releases and one-to-one conversations. We invited the journalists to visit the free testing by themselves. We addressed the general public with leaflets for university students and students of final classes. These leaflets were distributed on schools and faculties, educational stands were set up on central streets in Ljubljana (we had more than 25 stand in 3 weeks), we hanged posters about the action and free testing in waiting rooms of gynecological and general outpatient clinics as well as in faculties. In bars, waiters were wearing aprons with the inscription "I have nothing down there. What about you?" .

4.3. Conclusion of the action:

The humanitarian action "I have nothing down there. What about you?" was more than successful, since 2.247 individuals have attended our testing for chlamydeous infection, almost 130 % more than anticipated. The number of people, who attended the testing, confirmed that we successfully informed young people about the sexually transmitted chlamydeous infection and that we have encouraged them with our action to visit testing. We thanked everyone, who participated in the action with a nice letter, published on the web site www.pliva.si/klamidija (the web site does not work anymore, it was listed among general rubrics of Pliva's web site).

5. Implementation and Challenges:

The main challenge of the entire action was its strategic planning, since we were aware of the fact that Pliva does not have at its disposal a high financial budget for the communication support of the action. We also knew that the testing of 1.000 young people alone would be expensive (20.000 EUR), therefore the planning of the remaining communication of the action was a strategic challenge of creatively using the media. We wanted to attain a completely new, creative combination of media, which should as most as possible reach our primary target group - young people. We realized that the media would play a very strategic role; therefore it was of great importance to present the subject of chlamydeous infection as extremely important, so important that the media placed it on their media agendas itself. We could trace a wave of media publications on chlamydeous. Pliva was perceived as a credible partner, who has offered professionals, who could talk to the journalists.

Project budget for the complete media relations program was EUR 15.000. The budget included: renting of the room for the press conference, catering, press kit, gifts for journalists (T-shirts with the inscription "I have nothing down there. What about you?", silver key pendant shaped like a boy and a girl), printing of posters, printing of pamphlets, hiring people for the distribution of pamphlets, printing of felix cards, purchase and printing of T-shirts, purchase and printing of aprons, leasing of media area, leasing of toilet advertisement, etc.

6. Measurement/Evaluation of Outcomes:

The project achieved the goals set with all the audiences, which can be confirmed with the following results, acquired from Pliva and through press clipping:

- **Media:** A) by offering free testing Pliva gained media affection already at the beginning of the project, their attention for Pliva's sponsorship of free testing for chlamydeous infection was shown in the press articles; B) in first phase there were more than 10 press articles about the chlamydeous infection and Pliva's sponsorship; C) in the second phase there were 47 articles about the Pliva's sponsorship and chlamydeous infection (there were also some interviews with people/doctors) D) Pliva has established good and open relations with the journalists, who were reporting about the chlamydeous infection. These journalists now turn with their medical related questions always or also to Pliva;
- **General audience:** A) We allured 2.247 young people to visit the free testing. B) We carried out interview with passers on the main street in the center of Ljubljana. We asked them if they heard about chlamydeous infection already - 5 out of 7 answered that they read something about chlamydeous infection lately, that an action of free testing "I have nothing down there. What about you?" was organized under the sponsorship of Pliva (we published these poll in Pliva's external gazette Sreda). C) Pliva received letters and e-mails of congratulations from professional

publics, while their representatives were also praised for the communication support at social events.

- **The campaign had impacts also in society:**
 - o We are now speaking more openly on chlamydeous infection in Slovenia (it is no longer a taboo subject) and
 - o people are more aware of the problem of chlamydeous infection in our society.