**Stand Up For Your Life Social Marketing Campaign: Television Vignettes**

**Health Marketing**  
**Alberta Health Services**  
**Calgary, Alberta**

**PROJECT SUMMARY /** Stand Up For Your Life was an Alberta Health Services (former) Alberta Cancer Board social marketing campaign designed to influence targeted Albertans’ knowledge, attitudes and behaviors about living healthy. The campaign addressed a primary problem: Cancer is the leading cause of premature death for Canadians and Albertans, including Albertans in the most productive age group of 35–64 years. Approximately half of Albertans will develop cancer, and one quarter will die of it. New cancer cases are expected to increase in Alberta; however, research indicates that more than half of cancers can be prevented or identified early enough to be successfully treated. Since many cancer risk factors (e.g., an unhealthy diet and physical inactivity) are also risk factors for other chronic diseases such as heart disease and diabetes, changes in behaviors can potentially affect the rates of all chronic disease in Alberta. Therefore, rather than being disease-focused, Stand Up For Your Life focused on “living healthy”; it sought to promote living healthy as something that Albertans are doing and to make healthy lifestyles a greater priority for Albertans.

A pulsing strategy was used where concentrated “bursts” of promotional activity occurred in Pulse 1 (2008) and Pulse 2 (2009) of the campaign. In each pulse, a multipronged promotional strategy was implemented, including out-of-home, radio, online and television promotions. One activity was the Share Your Story contest, which was open to the Albertan public from October – December 2008. The contest invited Albertans to submit stories, videos or photographs of how they live healthy every day and stand up for their lives. The purpose was to increase audience participation and exchange (that is, the chance of receiving a reward for their living healthy behaviors and efforts). The contest was successful, with 142 submissions received. The highlight of Pulse 2 was five television vignettes that featured the contest winners at various life stages and with different living healthy challenges to overcome. All campaign elements were planned, developed, executed and monitored in collaboration with an external agency based in Toronto, Manifest Communications Inc.

**INTENDED AUDIENCE /** The target audience was a unique, untapped niche market in Alberta since existing healthy living programs and campaigns are targeted to other groups, such as women, children or youth. The target audience included:

- **People from 35–45 years of age:** Recognizing their mortality and the aging process, Albertans ages 35–45 are influencers of others, both older and younger. They are a key audience in attaining the (former) Alberta Cancer Board’s organizational goal to reduce projected cancer incidences by 35 percent by the year 2025.
- **College-educated people:** As revealed in the 2007 survey, education was the largest single determinant for movability or softness on values. College-educated individuals value and are interested in living healthy, but generally have yet to translate this into action.
- **Skewed family men:** Focus group discussions revealed that women often feel “maxed out,” and men feel that they have the capacity to live healthier if the efforts undertaken are fun and can include family and friends.
• **Intenders:** Intenders are *contemplating* (have acknowledged the problem and are beginning to think about change) or *preparing for* (planning to take action within the next month and make adjustments before behavior change) living healthy.

Research projects undertaken to help identify the target audience included:

- The *2007 Alberta Cancer Board Prevention Research Study* is the baseline assessment of public opinion on what Albertans know and believe about cancer prevention. A total of 2,500 interviews were conducted with Albertans 18 years of age and older. Topics included Albertans’ beliefs about the causes and preventability of cancer. In addition, a detailed analysis was undertaken to identify potential target audiences for social marketing.
- The *2008 Stand Up For Your Life Campaign Baseline Survey* was conducted prior to the campaign launch among 927 Albertans. Baseline measures were established regarding values and beliefs that influence the target behaviors (physical activity and healthy eating); the priority, social support, self-efficacy, Albertan pride, and experiential benefits of living healthy; media habits; and barriers to living healthy.
- Consultations in late 2008 with internal and external stakeholders and experts explored strategies for influencing the public and provided insights into opportunities, challenges and trends. Those interviewed included key stakeholders within the Alberta Healthy Living Network, Canadian Cancer Society—Alberta/NWT Division, Alberta Health and Wellness, Public Health Agency of Canada, etc.
- *Stand Up For Your Life* target audience exploration focus groups in 2009 provided a more thorough understanding of the types of influences that would encourage the campaign’s target audience to move toward living healthier. The target’s psychographic, behavioral and attitudinal factors were explored; their key influencers to living healthy, media habits and reactions completed Pulse 1 campaign activities.

**OBJECTIVES** / The creative objectives for the *Stand Up For Your Life* Pulse 2 television promotions were:
1. To have at least 3 percent of Albertans taking some action as a result of the campaign activities.
2. To effectively convey that “It’s Happening” in Alberta: More and more people are standing up for their lives.
3. To cut through the clutter (i.e., competing messages and promotions) that Albertans receive on a daily basis in their everyday lives.

**KEY MESSAGES/THEME** / Key messages/themes of the Pulse 2 television vignettes were:
- **“It’s happening” in Alberta:** Living healthy is an integral part of Albertans’ way of life and a point of pride.
- **Self-efficacy:** By highlighting the contest results and giving special tribute to outstanding Albertans who are taking a stand for their health and well-being, viewers may feel that they can do so as well.
- **By Albertans, for Albertans:** The call to action is to join and contribute to this movement by visiting Stand Up For Your Life online at [www.standupforyourlife.ca](http://www.standupforyourlife.ca).
- **Inspire and motivate:** Many of the entries showed how one individual’s stand for living healthy automatically affected and involved their families and friends. The impetus for
the individual (especially those in the target audience) to join and contribute to this
movement is the knowledge and understanding of how influential his/her personal actions
can be to others.

- **Partnership:** Highlighting the contest winners and the prize package from Be Fit For
  Life (a nonprofit organization that provides outreach programs and services to
  communities across Alberta) demonstrates that the campaign can profile its community
  partnerships.

**CREATIVE RATIONALE** / Television was selected as a medium based on research into the
target audience’s media habits; it is also the best medium to convey the campaign messages by
showing contest winners living healthy in their hometowns every day. A media partnership was
developed with Rogers Media Inc., allowing for prime exposure across relevant geo-targeted
programming (that is, on popular sports network Sportsnet West and on local television station
Citytv) with minimal production costs. The partnership also provided a connection to Charlie
Simmer, former National Hockey League player and current color commentator for the Calgary
Flames hockey team. Simmer proved to be an excellent spokesperson for the campaign, since
hockey is Canada’s sport of choice. Simmer was featured in each television vignette, and he
highlighted the contest and the entries received. Each vignette showed Albertans at different life
stages that the public can easily relate to, for example, a father who is trying to set a good
example for his young daughter by living healthy and a family who plays sports with their
teenage children.

**RESULTS** / The *Stand Up For Your Life* campaign awareness and recall survey was conducted
by an external market research firm among 1,001 Albertans immediately after Pulse 2 to measure
the media reach and impact of those campaign activities.

- **Objective No. 1 result:** Five percent (and 7 percent of the target audience surveyed)
  reported having taken some sort of action in response to at least one element of the
  campaign—surpassing the expected 3 percent change in this group.

- **Objective No. 2 results:** The television vignettes appeared to have been effective at
  communicating messages about physical activity and healthy eating. The predominant
  message received was one of living a physically active lifestyle—this was mentioned by
  64 percent of those aware of the advertisement. Secondary messages retained from the
  vignette included living a generally healthier lifestyle (27 percent) and eating healthy (21
  percent).

- **Objective No. 3 results:** Thirty-three percent recalled at least one element from Pulse 2
  with a similar level of campaign recall found among the target audience of men ages 35
to 44 who were surveyed (35 percent).
  
  - Television vignettes were the best recalled overall. When asked in an *aided*
    manner about the television vignettes, 22 percent of those surveyed (and 28
    percent of the target group) recalled (or may have recalled) a vignette featuring
    Charlie Simmer and using the tagline; thus, it appears that the vignettes did a
    reasonable job of cutting through the clutter of the many other ads in the
    marketplace.

**TIME FRAMES AND BUDGET**
Production of the television vignettes began shortly after the *Share Your Story* contest winners were announced (the contest closed in December, and the vignettes began airing in February 2009). This allowed Alberta Health Services to maintain the excitement and awareness generated from the contest. Most beneficial was the partnership with Rogers Media that produced tremendous cost and resource savings. For instance:

- **No setup/preproduction**: All materials, location bookings and staff (TV director, cameramen, etc.) were provided.
- **No talent fees**: Charlie Simmer was brought onto the project without associated fees. Also, there were no talent scouting fees or public relations engagement for talent recruitment.
- **No pitch requirements**: The team did not have to meet specific requirements to work with Rogers, and no subsequent negotiations were needed to obtain approval to work with Simmer.