

HEARING LOSS ICE CREAM



ABSTRACT

Ice Cream companies such as Ben and Jerry's and Haagen-Daz have long used their flavors to create awareness of important issues. Ice cream makers have tackled issues such as global warming, nuclear weapons, preservation of the Baltic Sea, and marriage equality.

In partnership with a major ice cream manufacturer, commission a new "hearing loss" themed ice cream, such as *Hear Dear*, to build awareness for hearing health and hearing loss.

This fun and whimsical (yet effective) idea can appeal to audiences worldwide and can be used to raise money for hearing advocacy and other hearing-related causes.

To increase educational outreach, this special themed flavor will feature colorful package graphics that reinforce hearing health messages with sketches and quick tips. Packaging can also include a special lid ring and a 'story' or information on healthy hearing practices.

Packaging and product advertising can also direct consumers to an interactive website that features hearing health games, quizzes and FAQs to educate visitors on the benefits of hearing health and encourage them to protect and value their hearing.

As with all new product introductions, the *Hear Dear* flavor would be supported with a multi-faceted marketing and promotions campaign. Once the campaign launched, awareness will be sustained through the manufacturer's social media platforms. By

leveraging the world-wide promotional/branding budget of a multi-national ice cream manufacturer, the message of hearing loss awareness has the potential to reach millions of people through the company's customer base.

This project will be a win-win for the manufacturer and the cause of hearing health. Manufacturers demonstrate good corporate citizenship and community service while building customer loyalty and creating buzz about their products. Partner charities reap the benefit of financial support provided by the sales of the cause-related product(s).

RATIONALE

Recently Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream launched a flavor that is only available in Nordic countries, called Nordic Water Peace. It's their first regional flavor, a joint effort with WWF as part of Operation Mermaid - a campaign to save the Baltic Sea from pollution. Ben & Jerry's also launched a flavor called "Yes Pecan" and donated the proceeds to the Common Cause Education Fund: a nonpartisan, nonprofit advocacy organization to help citizens make their voices heard in the political process.

Inspired by Ben and Jerry's, the Haagen-Dazs ice cream brand started its 'Love Honey Bees' campaign to help find a cure for Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) and to encourage sustainable pollination practices to ensure a safe and bountiful food supply. The campaign raised awareness of the issue, drove consumer action to help save the bees, and provided much needed research dollars to identify the cause of CCD and eradicate it.

Ice cream manufacturers are not the only ones doing cause marketing. According to a report published by *On Philanthropy*, 'cause' marketing sponsorship by American businesses is rising at a significant rate. Citing an IEG, Inc. study, \$1.11 billion was spent in 2005, an estimated \$1.34 billion spent in 2006, \$1.44 billion in 2007 and \$1.52 billion in 2008.

For-profit and non-profit organizations are increasingly leveraging cause-related marketing as a powerful marketing tool. A 2006 Cone Millennial Cause Study reports that 89% of Americans (aged 13 to 25) would switch from one brand to another brand of a comparable product (and price) if the latter brand was associated with a "good cause". Earlier studies by Cone indicate an upward trend in the number of Americans who associate their own buying habits with cause marketing as well as an expectation that the companies they patronize are "good corporate citizens."



GOAL(S)

- Partner with a global ice cream brand to create a hearing loss-themed cause-related product that raises awareness for hearing loss
- Seek opportunities via the media, the web and social media to create interest in the cause

AUDIENCE

Children through adults - everyone who enjoys ice cream!

EXECUTION

Preparation (1 year)

Develop a detailed feasibility study of ice cream consumers to demonstrate market for hearing loss-themed products

Establish a consortium of hearing health care and health care organizations, advocacy groups and influential supporters (celebrities, government and health officials, etc.) who pledge their support and endorse the project

Identify a hearing health charity with national or international reputation that will benefit in-need populations worldwide

Develop a sell-in presentation for manufacturers' branding/advertising/promotion or other gatekeeper agencies

Implementation (1 or more years)

Schedule and pitch concept to gatekeeper agencies for targeted manufacturers

Once accepted, work in collaboration with agency to develop a presentation to manufacturers marketing and corporate affairs representatives

When project is accepted and product is in development, join with consortium members to generate media coverage of the cause-related initiative

Once launched, continue consortium involvement in support - as needed by the manufacturer.

DELIVERABLES

Feasibility study demonstrating potential for cause-related marketing campaign build around hearing loss-themed ice cream

Establish consortium of thought leader/influential supporters

Sell-in initial concept/proposal to 5-10 agencies

Secure presentations to decision-makers at 3 ice cream manufacturers

Win approval from 1 manufacturer