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Public Relations Case Studies

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Run, Run, as Fast as You Can

Nike is one of the world's most famous brands with everyone either owning something Nike, or just knowing about the brand. It was founded in 1964 and now does some form of business in more than 170 countries (Encyclopædia Britannica, inc, 2023). It is easily identified by the "swoosh" and their slogan "Just Do It." Nike is known for having very successful and impactful campaigns. One of those famous campaigns is the "She Runs the Night" campaign in 2012. This campaign began because of the lack of women that wore Nike shoes for serious running. It was not as respected for running shoes for women until they challenged that idea with this campaign. Asics running shoes always had an upper hand in the women's running shoe department (Marketing Mag., 2022). It also brought to the surface the issue that most women face, not feeling safe to run at night. They spread awareness and recruited women from all over to start this. This campaign ended up winning a Media Federation of Australia award for Best Integrated Media Campaign (Wood, 2020).

The issue that Nike was having was that it was not a well respected brand for women's running shoes. They wanted to be a serious competitor in this department and get their customers talking about women's running. The different publics involved in this case included young women, employees and management, investors, and the media. Their main goal was to appeal to the women that regularly run and are wanting to change their choice of running shoe to Nike. They wanted to connect with these female runners and continue to lead in athletic wear in

most departments. Nike also wanted to help women that ran at night. They found that running was mostly done alone by women and they were usually left to overcome fears and achieve goals by themselves (Marketing Mag., 2022). Running at night is where many fears come for women because it is easier to be targeted that way. Employees and management also needed to add focus to women coming in to shop and hopefully encourage them to look at running shoes. This affected investors because they benefit from any increase in sales in Nike. If Nike was now a top competitor for women's running shoes, then the investors can always take away from that. The media was an affected public because this movement had to have a medium to make its way to customers. People were talking online about how this campaign is making them feel and that women runners can finally have a spot in the market.

The strategy of this campaign was to essentially create a community for women runners by using real women runners as the primary outlet to promote the community. Some of these tactics for the strategy included creating physical running communities, digital communities, mobile interactivity, and advertising (Wood, 2020). The running communities made women feel safer running at night and ultimately promoted Nike through this. Women felt that they had somewhere to turn to when they wanted to go for runs without having to have their usual fears. Nike announced a 13-kilometer night run to challenge the community and spread the word even more. The Facebook page that was created, "Nike She Runs," received 16,000 likes and 14,000 mentions in one month of operating (Campaign Brief, 2014). The hashtag, #nikesheruns, generated a total of 3 million total impressions, 31,982 new Facebook fans, 5,261 uses of the hashtag, and reached 14 million people (Campaign Brief, 2014). The community that was created was amazing. Automatically women began to feel more heard and represented within the running world. After a study done, it found that 87% of young female runners run with their

phone (Marketing Mag., 2022). Because of this study, Nike created an app that would further connect women with running communities as well as inspire them and motivate them to feel better at night. For the race, five young women were chosen to be ambassadors and promote the race for Nike (Marketing Mag., 2022). They told their stories that could play on video when scanned using a qr code. Some more promotion was through a partnership set up with Cosmopolitan. This included an editorial feature on night running, advertising, website integration, and a running workshop (Marketing Mag., 2022). Nike was making sure to cover all of their bases and it was working. The word was getting out to women and there was a huge community built.

This case was handled very well in my opinion. Nike saw a department that they were weak in, women's running shoes, and they created a well effective plan to create buzz around themselves. As a result of this campaign, there was a community of 54,762 female runners built (Marketing Mag., 2022). Nike also hit its target goals and multiple styles of their women's running shoes sold out. This campaign was also recognized by many media industry awards, winning the Best Integrated Media category at the 2012 Media Federation of Australia Awards and winning Best Engagement Strategy at the Festival of Media Awards Asia (Marketing Mag., 2022). At the actual race, 44 percent of the racers purchased footwear there. I believe that all publics were addressed and identified and each tactic was done very well. Nike covered all of its bases with their advertising and promoting of the race and their brand. They covered the digital and social media aspect through apps, hashtags, and a Facebook page. They also sparked running communities online so that this trend of women running together could continue even after the big race. Not only did they generate talk about women's biggest struggles with running,

but they also generated revenue which was ultimately Nike's goals in this campaign. They wanted to be a top shoe for women's running and they succeeded in 2012.

Nike's "She Runs the Night" campaign was began because Nike wanted to be #1 in the women's running shoe category. They were slightly trailing behind Asics and wanted to generate more talk in their women's department. They created their campaign in 2012 after polling women for their biggest struggle with running. These women responded that they did not feel safe running at night and were often alone with these fears. #SheRunstheNight was created and it created so much buzz in the women's running community. They were going on runs together in person and digitally checking up on each other. The campaign also generated lots of revenue and won multiple awards for being so effective. One downside about this case is that Nike was trying to appeal to women that ran alone, but instead they ended up asking them to all run together. Some people might enjoy running alone instead and were not appealed by this campaign. In addition to the tactics that Nike used, they could have created safe running routes for women to run on if they prefer to be alone. They are a big company with lots of influence and could easily create a few routes in some of the larger cities across the world. Besides that one fact, Nike did not have many other things that they could have altered with this campaign. It was overall extremely effective and they reaped the benefits of that strategizing.

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