The Heart Truth®
A Campaign for Women about Heart Disease

The Issue

- Heart disease is the #1 killer of women.
- One in four American women dies of heart disease*
- Almost half of women still don’t know heart disease is their #1 killer

Enter The Heart Truth

- The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) convened 70 women’s health experts in 2001 to address women and heart disease
- Result: The NHLBI sponsors *The Heart Truth*, a national awareness campaign for women about heart disease and leads a growing, national movement
- Created and launched in Washington, D.C., in September 2002

* Of the women who died in 2007 (the most current year for which data are available), 1 in 4 died from heart disease.
Objectives

• Raise awareness that heart disease is the #1 killer of women
• Increase awareness of the risk factors leading to heart disease
• Urge women to talk to their doctor about their personal risk for heart disease, and take action to lower that risk

Audiences

• Primary:
  - Women, ages 40-60, primarily those who:
    • Have at least one risk factor
    • Are not taking action

• Secondary:
  - Women, ages 18-39
  - Health care professionals
Campaign Planning and Development

- Rooted in social marketing process described in Making Health Communication Programs Work (NCI 2002).
- Science-based education materials
- Planning drew on relevant behavior change theories and models for influencing attitudes and behavior, such as the Transtheoretical Model of stages of individual behavior change, among others. Development activities included:
  - **Literature Review:** review of more than 200 research articles on cardiovascular disease in women and related health and behavior research and related survey data.
  - **Audience segmentation and analysis:** based on recommendations from the 2001 Strategy Development Workshop and a decision-making tool to evaluate merits of different audience segments.
  - **Environmental Scan:** analysis of news media coverage as well as complementary and competing women’s heart health programs and campaigns.
  - **Focus Groups:** included exploratory discussions and concept testing among women aged 40-60 representing diverse races, ethnicities, education, and income levels.

Brand Power: The Red Dress®

- Creation of a women and heart disease brand—The Red Dress®—the national symbol for women and heart disease awareness
- "Heart Disease Doesn't Care What You Wear—It's the #1 Killer of Women®"
- Formative research proved strong appeal to wide diversity of women in addressing myth that heart disease is a man’s issue
- A central tenet of the campaign brand, including materials with images of “real” women, fashion industry partnership, media coverage, community events, individual engagement
The Heart Truth Campaign

The Heart Truth Strategy

- Grassroots Engagement
- Strategic Partnerships
- Campaign Framework
- Media
Grassroots Community Programming

- **The Heart Truth® Road Show**, with free heart health screenings and educational materials
- **Women of Color Program**, to increase outreach to African American and Latino women
- **The Heart Truth® Champions**, a train-the-trainer program for community health workers collaboration with and funded by the HHS Office on Women’s Health (OWH)
- **Community grants** in support of The Heart Truth® local programming in collaboration with the FNIH, funded by the NHLBI and corporate cause marketing programs
- **Single City Program**, enabling community hosts to feature campaign materials at local events
- Collaboration with OWH on health professional outreach and education

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The Heart Truth Strategy

![Diagram showing Grassroots Engagement, Strategic Partnerships, and Media intersecting to form the Heart Truth framework](image)
Community/Non-profit Partners

Lend credibility, local reach and relevance.

The Heart Truth Strategy
Strategic Partnerships
Community/Non-profit Partners

[Logos of various community and non-profit organizations]

Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide
The Heart Truth Strategy
Strategic Partnerships

Media
Community/Non-profit
Strategic Partnerships
Corporate

Media Partners
Provide **national reach**, **influence** and **reinforcement** of local efforts.
Woman’s Day

National Wear Red Day

Woman’s Day

Woman’s Day Editor

The Woman’s Day red dress awards

This year marks the fifth anniversary of our Red Dress Awards, created to recognize those who have made significant contributions to the fight against heart disease in women. These amazing women were feted in New York City at a gala reception on January 31, where they received the Swarowski-designed awards.
The Heart Truth Strategy

Corporate Partners

Provide tremendous marketing muscle to break through the clutter and enhance visibility.
Diet Coke

• Retail Program

Social Media Integration

• *Heart Truth* Facebook pages for campaign ‘fans’ and for community Champions to share best practices
• Content amplified across Flickr, YouTube, Web-based PSA banners
• Twitter platform launched on National Wear Red Day 2010 to support local events
• Outreach to women’s health, lifestyle and fashion/entertainment-focused blogs
• Shareable widgets, badges etc. to support taking action on personal heart health
Lessons Learned

- Strive for flexibility, creativity and cooperation
- Walk a mile in your partner’s shoes
- Establish clear parameters
- Be prepared to invest
- Look for synergies between partners
- Resist the urge to sacrifice strategy for the “cool factor”
- Take risks
Impact and Outcomes

- Women’s awareness of heart disease as their #1 health threat in 2009 is 69%, up from 34% in 2000.
- Awareness of the red dress as the issue’s symbol in 2009 is 68%, up from 25% in 2005.
- From 1999 to 2006, NHLBI reports heart disease deaths in women decreased; longest consecutive decline so far
- In 2003, 1 in 3 women died of heart disease. In 2006, that changed to 1 in 4 deaths.
  - Major impact of improved prevention and treatment, but combined education efforts of many groups—with The Heart Truth® as a catalyst—have surely played a role.

Takeaway Points from WSMC

- Created a movement:
  - Multi-faceted, engaging
  - Inspired adoption and integration
- Applied both art and science:
  - Science-based information delivered in response to target audience, partner and stakeholder feedback
- Enabled women to be heroes in their own story:
  - Women at risk or living with heart disease shared their story
  - Community grassroots adopted the cause, lead the movement
Thank You!
For more information:  (Sarah Temple/Sarah.Temple@ogilvypr.com)
Social Marketing exCHANGE blog:  www.smexchange.ogilvypr.com
www.ogilvyPR.com
@OgilvyPR

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