

A SHOWCASE OF BEST PRACTICE IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

# EXCELLENCE AWARDS

## 2015

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**CATEGORY** BEST USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA  
**COMPANY** MSLGROUP  
**TITLE** ALWAYS #LIKEAGIRL

### ► JUDGES' COMMENT

*Sometimes a hashtag can be an afterthought to a wider campaign but that wasn't the case here. MSLGROUP used sophisticated insights to aid a creative process which was able to encapsulate 30 years of Always' brand purpose in a simple, sassy line, turning a well-worn pejorative on its head. A global message was managed seamlessly across continents, with organic support coming from everyone from dads to the First Lady of the United States, Michelle Obama. The campaign created an empowering call to action which has potential to become a movement not just for the target audience, but for generations of women.*

### BRIEF AND OBJECTIVES

Research showed that a girl's confidence plummets at puberty. At this time, phrases such as "like a girl" cast doubt on how powerful a girl can be. Always sought to redefine "like a girl" from an insult to inspiration.

P&G Always held the position of the FemCare global leader but its biggest competitor was connecting with millennial girls on social platforms in a more emotional way. Despite a 30-year commitment to empowering girls through puberty education, Always' brand purpose wasn't apparent to this new generation of consumers.

We wanted to redefine confidence in a way that would resonate with consumers. Our insight was that over 50% of women claimed a decline in confidence at puberty. Empowering girls during this time would give Always a powerful role.

P&G Always charged its agencies with creating a campaign that leveraged the brand's legacy of supporting girls at puberty.

Working with MSLGROUP, Always launched a global campaign to drive:

- Emotional connection to Always, especially amongst Millennials
- Popularity of the brand.

### RESEARCH AND PLANNING

To empower girls during puberty, Always tapped into an audience of millennial women. These women were young enough to relate to puberty, ambitious enough to make a difference, and more connected than any generation.

MSLGROUP conducted a study with Research Now to understand confidence at puberty and shape the campaign. We learned:

- 56% of girls experienced a drop in confidence at puberty
- Lowest confidence moments was when puberty started and during their first period

- 89% of females aged 16-24 agree words can be harmful, especially to girls. Words cast a lifetime of doubt on how powerful a girl can be.

MSLGROUP then looked at campaigns targeting our audience to understand engagement trends. We identified these key insights:

- Clear & simple articulation of idea & action
- Authenticity crucial
- Validate insight with data points
- Use celebrity influencers for buzz & visibility.

Empowering girls when their confidence is lowest became Always' mission. We would make "Like A Girl" a message of empowerment and hold a mirror up to society at large to show just how damaging these words were to girls, particularly at puberty.

### STRATEGY AND TACTICS

We wanted to take the insult "like a girl" and capture the negative power it creates to inspire a movement to change "Like A Girl" to mean "downright amazing".

We devised a social experiment to show the impact "like a girl" had on society. We built a brand campaign centred on this experiment to resonate with all generations of women. The centrepiece: a video directed by Lauren Greenfield capturing how people of all ages interpreted the phrase "Like A Girl."

During filming, it became clear that women had internalized the phrase "like a girl" to mean weakness and vanity. The experiment also demonstrated how a little encouragement could change girls' perceptions of what it means to do things "like a girl".

P&G charged MSLGROUP with creating an impactful launch for the video with specific reach and sharing goals:

- 2 million views
- 250 million media impressions.

## IMPLEMENTATION AND ADAPTATION TO DIFFERENT NATIONAL AUDIENCES

- Leverage research data: MSLGROUP used insights and data from its study to bolster campaign credibility and news value and drive content and messaging across program assets.
- Hashtag: We introduced the social hashtag #LikeAGirl as a rallying cry for the mission to change.
- Video launch: Leveraging trade media's reach and its role as promoter of buzzworthy creative content, the Always #LikeAGirl video was announced exclusively with Ad Age via a PR launch on June 26th on Always' YouTube site. MSLGROUP pre-seeded the video with influencers, who shared it on their platforms to spark early word of mouth and begin viral spreading to fuel traditional media coverage.
- Strategic media outreach: Post-launch, we reached out to online and broadcast media. Combined with influencer seeding, this ensured continual coverage across traditional and social media, driving consumer and media buzz.
- Engaging celebrities - Celebrities including Vanessa Hudgens and Bella Thorne posted tweets, which sparked
- Global campaign: The campaign was then expanded to 20 markets, and the U.K.

## BUDGET, EFFECTIVENESS AND EVALUATION

MSLGROUP developed a campaign that started as a social experiment and grew into a trending global social conversation surpassing the brand's expectations. Our video became one of the year's most popular viral videos.

Always achieved success with program goals by emotionally connecting with the target through a clear purpose.

According to research, 81% of women 16-24 support Always in creating a movement to reclaim "like a girl" as a positive and inspiring statement. Additionally:

- 76MM total global views on YouTube from 150 countries (90% from the 20-country activation)
- 1 million+ shared the video, 35,000 commented and user-generated content was 13%

- 4.5 billion global impressions, including 1.7bn in U.S., 1.6bn in U.K., 418m in France, 302m in China, and 148m in Germany.
- More than 1,880+ earned media placements were secured, including:
  - A TV segment with #1 U.S. morning show GMA
  - #1 in AdWeek's "Top 5 Commercials of the Week" June 20-27
  - #2 Spot for Ad Age's Viral Chart on 7/1
  - Coverage in influential media sites: BBC, Huffington Post, NYMag.com, Mashable, BuzzFeed & TIME
- More than 290 million social impressions and 133 thousand social mentions with #LikeAGirl (99% positive/neutral) in the U.S. alone
- #LikeAGirl trended on Facebook from 6/30-7/1 and increased Always Twitter followers 195.3%.

As a result of the consumer response, the brand is planning to extend the "Like A Girl" campaign and make it a core equity-building component to the Always brand.



# ABOUT US

We are the professional body for public relations practitioners in the UK. With over 11,000 members, we're the largest body of our type in Europe. We set standards through CPD; accreditation; training; qualifications; awards and the production of research, best practice and skills guidance. We advance professionalism in public relations by making our members accountable to their employers and the public through our Code of Conduct and searchable PR register.

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