



**Category:** Best Use of Digital

**Company:** Third City and Wellcome Trust

**Entry title:** Let's #OutsmartEpidemics

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**Brief and objectives:**

Epidemics are among the greatest threats to life, our health and prosperity. Yet the SARS, Ebola and Zika crises exposed fundamental weaknesses in our ability to prevent and respond to epidemic diseases.

To address this, Wellcome – one of the world's leading funders of medical research – alongside a range of governments and organisations including the Bill & Melinda Gates foundation, established CEPI: the Coalition for Epidemics Preparedness Innovations.

To achieve its mission to 'stop future epidemics by developing new vaccines', CEPI needed a campaign that could get the issue to the top of the world's agenda and gain support and investment from the world's decision makers.

The brief stressed the importance of identifying those with genuine influence in the political and scientific community, but also aimed for the 'halo' effect of a mass public awareness campaign (Nike's Girl Effect was mentioned by the client). The client's definition of 'public' was narrowed to those interested in global health issues, numbering millions rather than billions.

Our remit was strictly 'digital only' with media relations handled through the Wellcome press office; this meant everything hung on smart, compelling content execution, supported by paid social media. The brief necessitated a highly shareable solution.

**Rationale behind campaign, including research and planning:**

The two keys to this brief were targeting and relevance. We figured that if we could reach the right influencers with a compelling enough piece of content, their digital networks would do the work for us. This would require a staged process based on 'test and learn' and audience interaction.

We begin by using NodeXL and Facebook's Lookalike Audience Builder to create a realistic portrait of our core influencers and Crimson Hexagon to search and identify them online. This allowed us to develop and then filter a list of 500 activators for the campaign and a shortlist of 40-50 'super influencers'.

Qualitative research among elites also revealed a number of key barriers for this group:

- Management of epidemics seen as 'someone else's problem'
- Low understanding that vaccines could be used to prevent the spread of epidemics, as well as tackle their initial emergence
- A perception that the funding and political will to tackle the problem were not there.

The qualitative and profiling exercise informed our creative parameters:

- The execution needed to be unexpected and attention grabbing
- Avoid the 'clichés' of voluntary sector campaigns, including documentary style takes or 'virtue signalling'
- Messages needed to be literal rather than abstract, messages both rational and emotional.

### **Strategy and tactics, including the types and variety of digital media utilised, creativity and innovation:**

We landed on a campaign title that was inspiring AND a functional call to action: Let's #OutsmartEpidemics.

We worked with our creative partners, Curveball, to develop a short-form piece of animated content to form the heart of the campaign.

We based the film around the story of one little boy, Emile, who along with his family, perished in the Ebola outbreak. This hooked the audience into an emotive story before delivering the wider/literal CEPI messaging: that we've accomplished so much, but we're yet to outsmart epidemics.

The creative personified epidemics as a defeatable threat, celebrating past achievements and emphasising the importance of collective effort. We chose animation to minimise preconceptions around epidemics get across complex concepts visually translate to multiple languages.

The following targets were agreed:

- 1 million film views
- Build social licence with +5% FB likes and Twitter followers
- Increase conversations online around vaccine development and epidemics. Target +25% related conversations for launch week +50% on launch day
- Recruit 10 'super-influencers' to our cause.

### **Implementation of tactics:**

Prior to the launch of the campaign we reached out personally to our 'super-influencers', asking them to be involved. On the day of the launch we re-contacted them with a link to the animation and asked them to share across their social networks. Our secondary group of 'activators' were targeted using paid social that was surfaced in their Twitter and Facebook

timelines, using a rigorous test & learn process whereby the most effective executions were constantly tweaked based on levels of sharing.

The core #OutsmartEpidemics film was hosted on Facebook, Youtube and Twitter which were also targeted at the 'global health interested public' through paid ad platforms, to fill any gaps in our influencer outreach and sharing. To further increase the effectiveness we also optimised these on a daily basis, changing placements, messaging and key target demographics.

### **Measurement and evaluation:**

Digital impact:

- 3.2 million views across Twitter/FB/YT. Healthy 13% of views were 90s+
- +49% conversations around vaccines on week of activity and +89% on launch day (Brandwatch).

Social licence:

- 2218 additional FB page likes, +15% growth.

Influencer outreach:

- 17 influential scientists/groups (e.g. Max Roser, Jon Foley and Mark Lynas) shared film with total following of 334,000 (Crimson Hexagon).

KEY OUTCOME: Up the agenda. From subject 11/11 at Davos in 2016, Epidemics was 5/11 on ranking for 2017.

KEY OUTCOME: CEPI secured \$150m of funding at Davos and the EC committed to put forward a further \$200m for member state approval.

### **Budget and cost effectiveness:**

The ROI, with \$350 million of investment from a campaign that cost £74K amounts to nearly \$4K return from every dollar spent. However, we must acknowledge that other factors, including media relations from Wellcome press office, contributed to achieving this result.

The client made a conservative estimate of campaign impact of +\$50m fundraising, which would equate to a campaign ROI \$675 for every £1 invested.

To further confirm the success of the campaign, we asked partners to answer a questionnaire about impact. They agreed that it:

- Facilitated fundraising by making decision-makers more focused on the subject
- Made positive stakeholders more engaged and likely to give more
- Made the fundraising a more enjoyable and exciting process
- Made follow-ups and future activity more likely.