

## CIPR Pride Awards 2009

**Category:** Corporate Social Responsibility

**Campaign:** Drink Pink

**Client:** Ember Inns

**Agency:** McCann Erickson Communications House

### **STRATEGY**

Part of national pub group, Mitchell and Butlers, Ember Inns has more than 170 pubs across the UK.

Drink Pink is an annual campaign created by McCann Erickson in 2006 to encourage community involvement and raise money for national charity, Against Breast Cancer (ABC), as part of Ember Inns' commitment to supporting the local community. The campaign runs in Ember Inns for four weeks during May and June.

For Ember Inns' tenth birthday, McCann Erickson wanted to create an even bigger campaign that would raise a record amount for ABC as well as perpetuating a community atmosphere in the pub and the wider local area during a recession.

### **Objectives**

#### Positioning

- Position Ember Inns as a charitable brand at the heart of the local community.
- Increase funds for Against Breast Cancer by 40 percent.

#### Engagement

- Create an interactive campaign to encourage new and existing customers to engage with the brand beyond its food and drink offering and to participate in fundraising events.
- Encourage more men to engage with the fundraising activities (previous year's Drink Pink has had a female focus).
- Drive traffic to the Ember Inns, Drink Pink and ABC websites where there was more information on about ABC and its campaign to find a breast cancer vaccine.

### **Challenges**

- Raise a record total for Against Breast Cancer in a climate when cash donations to charities have fell by £367 million compared to 2007.<sup>1</sup>
- Encourage people to engage with their local communities at a time when people are inclined to stay at home to save money.

## Response

McCann Erickson responded with a strategic PR campaign that positioned the local pub as an experience through which customers could interact with the Ember brand in a community context.

The agency employed a variety of public and media relations tactics to create interest, and build and maintain momentum throughout the four weeks.

## Media Targets

- Regional press.
- Trade publications were targeted to build awareness of Ember Inns as a brand that continues to invest in charity campaigns when other pub groups are struggling.

## IMPLEMENTATION

4 phases

### 1. Preparation

- The agency was instrumental in generating and maintaining a relationship with ABC to drive the campaign. This also led to the charity's investment in POS and supplying branded products for the pubs.
- The agency secured high-profile celebrity, Greg Rusedski, to front the campaign on a regional and national level. Greg was chosen to appeal to both male and female audiences and to engage with the Ember customer beyond the company's food and drink offer. Supporting photography was arranged. (See Slide 1 for examples)
- McCann Erickson assisted the M&B team in securing reputable suppliers to support the campaign including Jacobs Creek, Martini and Jacques cider.
- Event suggestions were produced to engage local customers and to create photo opportunities for regional media to raise awareness of the campaign in the local community. (See Slides 2, 3 and 4 for examples) Interview briefs were prepared for pub team members.

### 2. Intrigue

- A series of teaser HTML mailers were created to target national and regional media in the days leading up to the campaigns launch. (See Slide 5 for mailers) These were supported by Tweets posted on the agency's Twitter page to create interest with key media and consumers.

### 3. Drive awareness of the launch

- An HTML guest communication was drafted and issued to the Ember Inns customer database.

- Online content was supplied for a dedicated webpage including quotes of endorsement from charity patrons including Julie Cowell, Ben Shepherd, Lucy Rusedski and Duncan Bannatyne. (See Slide 6 for website print screen)
- A national release was issued to print, radio, television and online.
- A regional launch release was tailored for local pub clusters and issued to local print, broadcast and online to engage with local guests.
- A separate trade release was issued to raise awareness of Ember's charity work in the food and drink industry.
- Launch activity was supported by the agency's Twitter page which led to online interaction with trade press.

#### 4. Maintaining Momentum

- A second HTML guest communication was issued to the guest database inviting guests to attend their local pink party over the Whitsun bank holiday weekend.
- A dedicated hotline service was created for the pubs and diary date releases were compiled listing the in-pub events in each cluster throughout the campaign. Journalists were actively encouraged to attend the events and multiple photo/interview opportunities were secured. (See Slides 2, 3 and 4 for examples)
- The agency commissioned a trend research piece about the trend for men to wear pink, promoting male engagement with Drink Pink and ABC. The trend piece was targeted at a broader cross section of journalists.
- A national release was issued and statistics were also compiled regionally. Twenty regional releases were tailored and issued to continue fundraising levels in the last week. (See Slide 6 and 7 for selected examples)

## **CREATIVITY**

McCann Erickson brought a fresh face to a three year charity campaign, capturing the imagination of Ember guests and the media, as well as successfully positioning Ember at the heart of the local community.

Creative ideas and new ways of thinking were present at all stages of the campaign:

- Imaginative charity focused HTML Mailers to create media intrigue. (See Slide 5 for mailers)
- Original trend research to engage men in the fundraising activities and refresh media interest. This was accompanied by separate imagery, designed to capture the attention of a broader spectrum of journalists.
- Innovative ideas for in pub events to drive customers into the pub including painting pubs pink, grape treads, barrel rolls, pamper nights, garden parties and pink car washes. (See Slide 2, 3 and 4 for examples)

## **EVALUATION AND MEASUREMENT**

Hits to the website and click through rates from the HTML mailers were closely monitored. Ember Inns' customer surveys continued as normal and were feedback was taken into account. Dry and wet sales were compared to those of the same period last year and the fundraising total was taken into account.

### **COST EFFECTIVENESS**

- 105 pieces of press coverage achieved to date
- Circulation of 2,504,860
- Potential audience of 7,514,580
- £128,691 perceived value
- ROI of over 5:1

### **FINAL RESULTS AGAINST OBJECTIVES**

#### Digital

3,202 views to the Drink Pink website

Drink Pink HTML was delivered to 33,610 customers and opened by 11,929 customers (35.5% success rate)

#### Fundraising

Current of £43,803 with 52 pubs still to add to the fundraising totals

#### Sales

The sale of pink drinks raised £10,848 alone

---

2 <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/press/releases/?id=12196>