



International, Integrated and Digital Champions Drink Responsibly

A best practice CSR campaign for Bacardi Limited

- International – PR campaign across **40 countries**
- Integrated – PR campaign that supported and **amplified media spend**, internal communications and stakeholder outreach
- Digital – **online and offline PR converged** to drive awareness of the campaign website

Objective

Bacardi Limited (Bacardi), one of the largest spirits companies in the world, partnered with Burson-Marsteller (B-M) to launch its first ever global corporate responsibility campaign, *Champions Drink Responsibly*. The objective was to position Bacardi as a responsible company, prepared to address alcohol harm issues. This is in response to growing pressure from regulators and political stakeholders for the drinks industry to do more to tackle the problems associated with excessive alcohol consumption, and it was Bacardi's belief that this was important.

Strategy

The campaign specifically targeted the subject of drinking and driving using seven-time Formula 1™ World Champion Michael Schumacher. Our campaign strategy was developed using a stakeholder mapping exercise to identify the key demographics of drivers most likely to drink and drive.

The Champions Drink Responsibly campaign runs for three years, so B-M devised a phased strategy to build Bacardi's CSR profile, and spread the message that 'Drinking and Driving Don't Mix':

Date	Activity	Objective
Nov 08	Digital campaign launch	Use online and offline PR to drive campaign website traffic
May 09	Media hospitality event	Generated high-quality coverage with international lifestyle media
July 09	Television stunt	Create stunt to attract large international audience

The B-M team were responsible for managing all aspects of the programme from strategic planning, event management, media outreach and internal communications, to the generation of PR collateral, b-roll, photography, speech writing, viral creation, digital strategy, digital seeding, and the measurement and evaluation of these materials.

Challenges

As an alcohol business, any PR or advertising campaign has to take account of local legislation around the marketing of alcohol. This required a high level of due diligence in the message training and media strategy. Working with Michael required that every event was planned, tested, and rehearsed to ensure time was maximised.

Phase 1 – Bringing the message online

Bacardi ran a consumer promotion offering winners the “Driving Experience of a Lifetime” - to be raced around the infamous Ascari race-track in Spain by Michael Schumacher. The promotion was run online at the campaign website www.championsdrinkresponsibly.com. B-M devised a PR and digital strategy to drive traffic to this site. This included two viral videos featuring Michael that were translated into six languages for local market use. These videos, plus new photography, were seeded on key social networking sites such as Facebook, Wikipedia, Flickr, and YouTube. B-M also used Google Adwords to drive further ‘click-throughs’ to the site. A detailed PR toolkit was produced for 35 Bacardi markets, containing press materials, photography, Q&A and b-roll, together with feature and story ideas to push the on-line promotion. This was supported by a PR campaign, which included issuing a social media news release via PR Newswire, a series of five exclusive videos with Michael on MSN in four countries, and an interview on Sky News.

Phase 2 – Media trip of a lifetime!

B-M organised a media trip offering the opportunity to be driven by Michael around the Ascari race circuit, and quality time with the previously elusive Schumacher. Attendance was secured from a range of key lifestyle and sporting media, including; Hello, OK, GQ, and Esquire, and broadcast media such as ESPN Star Sports, Germany’s RTL, Mexico’s TV Azteca, and Times Now from India. The wealth of international media brought coverage in over 48 countries, pushing further into the public eye the message that ‘Drinking and Driving Don’t Mix’.

A series of carefully structured one-to-ones, broadcast interviews, and roundtables were organised giving media access to Michael. To ensure the media captured the seriousness of the message, B-M prepared press conference materials, and trained a Bacardi mixologist to interact with media, presenting non-alcoholic cocktails as a responsible, fun alternative to alcohol. B-M brought its own in-house film crew to capture content for b-roll distribution, including in-car footage of Michael driving. The media were given footage of their driving experience with Michael resulting both online and offline coverage. B-M also seeded video messages from Michael to Facebook fan groups, resulting in growing support from across the site.

Phase 3 – Top Gear Champion

B-M identified that the BBC Top Gear program would provide an excellent platform to reach the target demographic on a global scale.

However, finding a way to get the campaign on the show, and overcome BBC restrictions was a challenge.

The PR team spent many months negotiating with the Top Gear production team to find a way to achieve this. The result was one of the most watched Top Gear episodes in history; for the first time the celebrated ‘Stig’ was revealed to be... Michael Schumacher! His legendary guest appearance on the show included a 1:1 studio interview highlighting his commitment to promoting responsible drinking with Bacardi. Top Gear also showed a heavily branded Bacardi viral film shot in Ascari.

The episode was watched by over 7.1million viewers in the UK, and will reach a potential audience of 300 million when it is shown in a further 100 countries over the next 18 months. The episode was the second most viewed YouTube video in the entire world that week. The success and popularity of the show resulted in a surge of interest surrounding Bacardi’s corporate responsibility campaign, as well as direct praise from Bacardi’s CEO, Seamus McBride.

Results

- 700+ pieces of print and online coverage
- 20+ broadcast clips globally incl. a 30minute program on ESPN Star Sports dedicated to the campaign
- Coverage in 48 countries
- 20 journalists attended the Ascari event representing over 30 markets
- The campaign has reached at least 80million people (based on circulation/viewership excluding Top Gear)
- AEV of over \$6 million +
- The global website received 250,000 competition hits
- The viral videos have been watched by over 500,000 people

“Burson-Marsteller - Thank you for a job truly well done!”

Seamus McBride, CEO, Bacardi Ltd

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