

Program Overview & Objectives

Situation Analysis

After a successful campaign in late September 2013 announcing that Yuengling's Ice Cream would be returning to store shelves, Buchanan PR began a new campaign to reintroduce the beloved PA ice cream brand back into the market after a nearly 30-year hiatus.

This task was not as simple as it would seem. Entering markets where the Yuengling name is not well known with no advertising or marketing support and a small budget required creativity and a tactical approach. After the announcement, Buchanan PR and Yuengling's Ice Cream decided to divide the re-launch into four segments: pre-production, production, on sale and continued growth.

Goal

Use traditional and social media to grow the Yuengling's Ice Cream fan base throughout the United States, but specifically in the 10 states carrying the ice cream. And ultimately to entice grocery store chains to stock and continue to carry the ice cream.

Objectives

1. Continue to increase awareness of the product to encourage grocery stores to carry it
2. Increase demand via fans so they request the ice cream at their local grocery stores
3. Gain a loyal social media following to help grocery stores see that Yuengling's is a profitable ice cream to stock

Execution & Tactics

Pre-Production

Using the announcement as a springboard, Buchanan PR positioned the executives of Yuengling's Ice Cream as experts in bringing a brand back to market.

Once the social media platforms were officially launched, the process of creating a brand voice began. Buchanan PR created a homey, welcoming feel. We aimed to make the fans feel like they were members of the Yuengling's Ice Cream family by responding to each posting and sharing personable statuses, images and information. Since the ice cream had been in production decades before, we asked our *more mature* fans to share their memories of the former ice cream.

Production

Because of the demand from consumers and grocery stores, production of the ice cream was moved up by two months. Buchanan PR invited a select number of media – only those who previously covered the ice cream – to the manufacturing facility in northeast Pennsylvania (more than two hours from Philadelphia) for a tour and first taste of the ice cream. Almost all media accepted and sent reporters. Those who were unable to accept the invitation did stories using our images, b-roll and/or a sister station's coverage.

Leading up to the production, we held a weekly contest for fans to win Yuengling's Ice Cream merchandise. Entry was as simple as answering a question about a favorite flavor or New Year's resolution, and crossed all platforms. The day before production, we took close-up photos of random items around the dairy, like a hairnet, and posted them to social media with comments about clues to a big surprise. On the day of production, we used photos of the signature ice cream flavor – Black & Tan – to post across all platforms and to launch the company's Instagram.

On Sale

Because of shelving procedures at stores, this task proved to be a bit tougher. We worked with a single store – Weis Markets in Pottsville, PA – to ensure that they would have the product on the shelves before anyone else. We offered an exclusive to the *Associated Press* who went to the store to film and interview those buying the first quarts.

Because it would be at least a month until the ice cream made it from production to the shelves of grocery stores, we knew fans would get restless. We used this time to answer questions about where it would be sold and to promote the idea that if their store wasn't selling it, they should contact the manager to request it. Once it was more prevalent on shelves, we started using our fans as the focus of our social media pages – asking for photos of them enjoying the ice cream. We'd take those photos and post them across platforms. Because it's a premium ice cream and it's a bit more expensive, there were many concerns about the price brought to our social media channels. We took the opportunity to educate our fans about the differences in ice cream.

Continued Growth

Once the initial excitement of the brand wore off, the goal was to keep it relevant and top-of-mind. We used any initiative Yuengling's Ice Cream was doing – seasonal flavors, school fundraisers, charity donations, sampling events, major contests and awards – to contact media, always giving it to the hometown newspaper the evening before it was announced to everyone else.

We continued to engage with fans via our social media platforms, answering questions, addressing concerns and having fun. We set up contests that resulted in free merchandise or ice cream – notably during National Ice Cream Month when we gave away five prizes each week. Our biggest contest was held in September and crossed both social and traditional media. We launched a contest to find an official taste-testing

group. Those chosen would receive samples of flavor concepts and tell the company their thoughts and give input on changes. Entrants submitted a 300-word essay about why they should be chosen. Buchanan PR scoured the more than 400 entries and chose 20 finalists. Yuengling's Ice Cream ultimately decided to keep all of them.

Evaluation & Results

This campaign showed a direct correlation between the ice cream sales and the public relations program, something that is generally very hard to measure.

As a result of the media relations and social media buzz:

- Set to originally produce in March, ice cream production was moved up by two months
- The company's two-month supply of ice cream sold out in in two-and-a-half weeks
- 280+ grocery stores requested the first batch
- Grocery stores that had no intention of selling the ice cream began scrambling to get it on the shelf as quickly as possible due to customer demand

Traditional media

More than 1,500 stories about Yuengling's Ice Cream ran between October 1, 2013-September 30, 2014. Appearing in all 50 states, and Washington, D.C., these stories represented a circulation/viewership/unique visitors per month total of more than 1 billion and a publicity value in excess of \$1 million. Feature stories included:

- *Inc.*
- *USA Today*
- Bloomberg TV – *Taking Stock with Pimm Fox*
- Associated Press

Social media

Between October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014:

- 331% increase in Facebook likes
- 143% increase in Twitter followers
- Nearly 300,000 impressions on Twitter

Buchanan

PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Posts on grocery store social media sites from consumers requesting the ice cream
- 190 followers on Instagram since January 2014 launch