

Campaign Title: TV Doctors of America

Brand: Cigna

Company(s) Involved: Cigna, Ipsos, OMD, McCann New York, MRM // McCann

Category: Impact on the World

Summary

Heading into the all-important health insurance open enrollment season, Cigna needed a campaign that continued on its mission of promoting preventive care, but with a new angle. To drive awareness and consideration for Cigna while also driving Americans to get a potentially lifesaving annual check-up, Cigna decided to switch things up by using unlikely spokespeople: fictional doctors.

Through a robust mix of primary and secondary research and insight gathering, we strategically assembled the TV Doctors of America, a cross-generational ensemble of fictional TV doctors on a mission to save real lives. Along the way, we also used concept and copy testing to pressure test the idea and ensure it would be effective in delivering on our objectives.

And luckily, it was. To date, the campaign has delivered over 3.5 billion impressions, and received overwhelmingly positive buzz and sentiment in a usually disliked and distrusted category.

Marketing Challenge

For years, doctors have been urging Americans to get an annual check-up – and for years, many of us have been ignoring them. Today, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that Americans use preventive care at only **half the recommended rate**.

At the same time, the CDC also estimates that as many as **100,000 lives per year** could be saved if every American went for their annual check-up.

We knew that in order to break through and affect positive change for both the brand and the health of Americans, we would need to successfully reach two different audiences. For the Americans who are proactive about preventive care (the “health engaged”), we would need to drive brand awareness and consideration for Cigna. For the groups who are less proactive (the “health unengaged”), we would need to do the same **in addition** to driving them to get their annual check-ups. And to do all of this while breaking through the clutter of health communications, our message needed to come from a relatable, influential, and perhaps unexpected source.

To this end, we figured that instead of enlisting traditional medical doctors, we would leverage the recognizability and attention-grabbing power of America’s most recognizable doctors: TV Doctors.

Methodology

Immediately after landing on the TV Doctors idea, we partnered with LBR Insight to field qualitative concept testing in two cities. We designed a screening survey that let us recruit respondents from both the “health engaged” and “health unengaged” targets. Then, we crafted our discussion guide to pressure test our creative idea and probe on the differences in barriers and motivations between these two targets, ultimately learning that our unengaged targets would require more exposure to the campaign in order for them to be driven to take preventive care action.

Next, we moved onto assembling our TV Doctors ensemble. In order to maximize impact we needed to connect with a cross-generational target, so we used Nielsen ratings data to assemble a list of the highest-rated medical procedural dramas and comedies from across the years. To ensure universal breakthrough and relevance, we pored through search engine data (using various time period filters) to gauge buzz around each program and ensure that each of our selected shows was breakthrough when it premiered, but also still relevant today.

After landing on M*A*S*H, ER, Scrubs, House, and Grey’s Anatomy as anchor shows, we identified the main and most recognizable actor from each, and used their E-poll scores to ensure awareness, likeability, and trustworthiness across the board. We also had to search each actor’s profile for any ties they had to health and wellness to ensure they aligned with Cigna’s overall mission.

After production, we partnered again with LBR Insight to field qualitative focus groups in two cities. This time around, we exposed respondents to rough cuts of our creative work to gauge reactions and identify any red flags or potential optimization opportunities ahead of locking in our final edit.

We also fielded quantitative copy testing using Ipsos’ ASI:Connect, a pre-test designed for today’s media landscape & creative challenges. The campaign was exposed in a natural environment, recreating the distraction of multiple messages to help us understand whether our campaign and message would breakthrough and create attention. We know that 50% of ads that fail do so

because of poor branding, and ASI:Connect allowed us to determine whether consumers could spontaneously play back the brand name in a low involvement environment with maximum distraction. In addition to this, we used neuroscience to select the strongest creative through a rich understanding of consumer engagement.

Creative Execution

For the first time ever, make-believe doctors were enlisted to save real lives in Cigna's new integrated campaign, "The TV Doctors of America," featuring Alan Alda (M*A*S*H), Patrick Dempsey (Grey's Anatomy), Noah Wyle (ER), Lisa Edelstein (House), and Donald Faison (Scrubs).

They've looked the part. They've used the lingo. But now, these well-known actors from some of TV's most beloved medical shows were able to use their "skills" to make a difference. How? By urging everyone to go to a real doctor for an annual checkup and take control of their health.

To spread our life-saving message far and wide, we launched with high-impact broadcast TV, but also enlisted our celebrity ensemble to release campaign content to their millions of combined social followers on a rolling basis.

We also tapped into The Emmys – TV's biggest night – by running work during the show and setting up a dedicated social command center that allowed us to respond to and engage with fans as they reacted to the campaign. We also purchased #GoKnowControl—our campaign call to action—as a top promoted trend on Twitter for the night to increase our reach and impact.

Lastly, to account for the need for increased exposure needed to drive our health unengaged targets to take action, we tapped our digital agency partners to develop a digital re-targeting strategy that served up consumers with different, fresh messaging as it spelled them through each of the three Go, Know, and Take Control campaign pillars.

Business Results

As we began planning for the TV Doctors campaign, we knew we had three primary challenges: capture viewers' attention, ensure the work effectively links to the brand, and drive consumers toward our desired action: get an annual check-up.

Fortunately, the campaign conquered all three.

Capturing Attention

Qualitative and quantitative research results revealed that our multi-generational cross-section of TV doctors struck an emotional cord with viewers (across age groups) by generating excitement and nostalgia that captured attention and kept them entertained and engaged from beginning to end. This was later validated in social, where we saw a 55% positive sentiment rate around the brand during our launch, compared with an average of 8% for our competitors. This amounted to a 267% increase above average brand sentiment for the first half of 2016.

Linking Creative to the Brand

Facial coding technology used in our quantitative testing revealed that engagement with the work was highest in the final seconds of the commercial, when the ensemble is assuming its dramatic but comical "doctor poses." Knowing this, we made the strategic decision to insert an art card with the Cigna name, logo, and the address to our campaign-specific microsite at this very point. Consequently, brand linkage ratios were significantly above norms. And to date, Cigna has reported a 400% increase in web traffic.

Driving Check-Ups

Quantitative testing showed that 40% of viewers planned to schedule a checkup as a result of seeing this campaign and that consideration of Cigna as a health insurer was significantly higher among those who saw the campaign.

Other Positive Results

Furthermore, Cigna reached its quarterly goal of 300 million PR earned media impressions in the first week of the campaign live date, and by the one-month mark, we surpassed the campaign goal by 145%, earning over 734 million impressions at an estimated value of \$1.73M.

To date, the TV Doctors campaign and its life-saving message has earned over 3.5 billion impressions, and has over 200,000 PR shares.