

**Campaign Title: ARMOR up**

**Brand: Nexplanon®**

**Company(s) Involved: Merck, Rosetta, Sommer Consulting, Brado, Ipsos, DDB, Initiative**

**Category: Big Data**

### **Summary**

While different milestones in a woman's life can impact contraception method choice, 'the pill' is usually the first and most often-used method. The pill has a 61% share of the category and a loyal following among women who view it as convenient to use and need everyday affirmation of birth control. Our challenge: First, identify a distinct segment of the child-bearing population who are interested in a longer-term form of birth control and develop a successful DTC campaign to: 1) reach and build brand awareness among this appropriate patient population making Nexplanon more 'top of mind' among healthcare practitioners (HCPs) 2) help overcome existing misconceptions about the product form, and 3) tap into peer relationships that are important to this population. The choices we made, from using linguistics experts and a well-thought out segmentation study to identify a population segment that were interested in a longer-term form of birth control like Nexplanon, to using a unique 'building blocks' research approach to positioning and concept development, resulted in a campaign (ARMOR up) that passed every action standard set during testing and has built Nexplanon awareness to an all-time high.

## Marketing Challenge

The birth of a child brings joy, happiness and hope... But for some, pregnancy at the wrong time can impact a woman's ability to pursue professional goals, financially support a child or existing children or can affect a family relationship due to cultural or religious beliefs. While the pill is the most-used method of contraception in the U.S., even the most diligent person can forget to take it.

Nexplanon is the only form of long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) that is implanted in the arm. While over 99% effective, there has been low awareness among women and misperceptions. In addition, while HCPs thought of Nexplanon for women at high risk of unintended pregnancy, it was not top of mind for a broader range of appropriate patients. A research plan was executed to determine the right opportunity for Nexplanon and identify a communication platform that would build brand awareness among appropriate patients and HCPs, in order to help overcome any misconceptions about the product and start a conversation among peers that could help carry the brand given its moderate budget.

## Methodology

Although numerous market research projects had been conducted for Nexplanon, none of those projects provided the depth of market, brand and competitor insights needed to comprehensively address the marketing challenge. Consequently, the Nexplanon team decided to embark on a research plan designed and executed as though Nexplanon was a new market entrant.

The core building block of the research plan was a segmentation study conducted with 3,425 women aged 18-40. The substantial sample size provided a much deeper level of insights than had ever been seen previously.

Advanced analytical techniques identified a sizable, clearly identifiable and actionable segment of appropriate patients for Nexplanon. The research confirmed that there was a significant opportunity for the brand beyond women at high risk of unintended pregnancy, and provided deep understanding of who the Nexplanon woman is and what's important to her.

To maximize the broader opportunity identified in segmentation, the team set out to build a new DTC campaign using some innovative research techniques. We started off with component positioning to uncover key insights, reasons to believe (RTBs) and benefits that became the pillars of our concepts. Concept and print testing was conducted followed by a unique series of AdLabs which integrated quantitative and qualitative research in three cities over three days to narrow down and optimize potential campaigns. The final step was quantitative copy testing, including biometrics, to identify the winning campaign, ARMOR up, which met all action standard hurdles.

## Creative Execution

In developing the creative, the team focused on two core insights:

- Most women are taking birth control because they have plans/goals and a vision they want to achieve in the next few years.
- Nexplanon provides up to three years of continuous birth control protection.

ARMOR up was found to strongly resonate with this segment of potential patients and aligned with the core insights and brand personality in communicating freedom, protection, and empowerment.

The headline "ARMOR up" has a double meaning, adding a playful element to the print ad. It conveys that Nexplanon is an arm implant, while also communicating how it can be used for pregnancy prevention. Similarly, the images are of women flexing their biceps, demonstrating both empowerment and the location of Nexplanon.

The commercial shows a diverse array of women flexing their muscles and speaking to how they "ARMOR up with Nexplanon." Single women, a woman with her child and a woman with her partner are all included to show how Nexplanon is appropriate for various life stages.

Digital assets use the same creative components, ensuring cohesiveness across media formats.

## Business Results

The campaign launched in May 2016 with print, followed by digital and in-office, and the TV launch is planned for December. The early impact as measured by tracking studies is noteworthy:

- Both brand and advertising awareness have reached all-time high levels
- The branding ratio is higher than the previous campaign and is significantly higher than in-class competitors
- Over half of the women aware of Nexplanon say they will ask their health care provider whether Nexplanon might be appropriate for them
- More than half of the women who recognized Nexplanon's digital campaign contacted their doctor about Nexplanon, and 75% of those women decided to get Nexplanon inserted