

Campaign Title: Captain Quidel vs. Influenza

Brand: Quidel

Company(s) Involved: Quidel, Fizz

Category: Transformation

Summary

Influenza can hospitalize on average more than 200,000 people and cause up to 49,000 deaths each year in the U.S. Yet people treat the disease like the common cold. In their quest to eradicate flu deaths Quidel, a medical diagnostics company, developed testing technology that aggregates near-real time flu test data that allows healthcare providers to see the incidence of flu in their area.

Quidel hired Fizz to educate physicians and the public on the value of flu testing before treatment. During Fizz' research process, we discovered flu information is extremely compelling to consumers.

Fizz employs WOMM techniques to help eradicate influenza apathy. Captain Quidel shares the testing story in everyday settings. VW Flu Bug cars are beacons for flu discussion.

Results:

- 29,110 Face-to-Face conversations
- Generated more social media posts in 1 day than the previous year
- 108,432,000 follow on conversations

Marketing Challenge

The eradication of flu deaths. The lack of public awareness for the seriousness of influenza (on average more than 200,000 hospitalizations and up to 49,000 deaths per year) and the inconsistent use of flu testing by physicians contributes to continued widespread infection rates.

Intensive public health flu vaccination campaigns and heavy traditional advertising for both OTC and prescription remedies creates an environment where everyone thinks they know everything there is to know, yet they have no knowledge of the importance of flu testing.

Our challenge is twofold:

1. Get the public to treat influenza seriously, practice simple prevention techniques and get a flu test as soon as they feel sick. Because the flu looks like many other respiratory diseases, our goal is to get consumers to meet with a healthcare professional so they know what they have and treat it appropriately.
2. Encourage physicians to test for flu more often and use the Quidel Sofia/Virena testing system.

Methodology

Quidel, a California-based international medical diagnostics company and a leader in influenza monitoring and surveillance, developed technology that aggregates de-identified patient test results from a doctor's office or distributed lab network for near real-time disease analysis. This significantly helps doctors manage their testing labs and improve patient care. It also provides public healthcare professionals a near real-time view of influenza in their communities, their state and across the country, something never before available with this degree of accuracy and timeliness. Currently, the CDC provides a flu map, but the data is dependent on voluntary reports from health professionals around the country. The information is sporadic and delayed.

Fizz' Focus and Design process of intensive online/offline research, client and consumer interviews and client document review led to the insight that the data aggregated by Quidel's Sofia/Virena system would be incredibly valuable to the public. The same influenza information provided to the CDC could be made available to the consumer. Nothing like this is available. Sites that provide influenza outbreak information are based on generic data scrubbed from online sources – like how many people in an area searched for influenza symptoms or flu remedies.

Creative Execution

With an online, dynamic flu map, Quidel will enable consumers and physicians to access accurate influenza activity in their county for free, anytime they want, just by going online. Not only will they be able to get an accurate read on flu in their community and the age groups being affected the most, they will have information they need to help reduce the spread of the disease.

Quidel has a national sales team focused on healthcare professionals. Therefore, our campaign focuses on educating consumers about flu prevention and recommends they go to their doctor for flu testing and treatment options. Increasing the number of patients asking for a flu test will increase the number of flu tests performed, thereby increasing the data points for the influenza tracking map.

While the flu map is being developed, Fizz started working to eradicate the lack of influenza awareness, changing attitudes from “Oh, it’s just the flu” to “I feel really bad, like I might have the flu. I need to get a flu test to be sure. And I need to stay away from other folks.” We want people to understand just how dangerous the flu can be.

We used word of mouth marketing techniques to generate attention and provide the opportunity to have conversations. We turned VW bugs into moving flu viruses. Using a wrap to create a field of influenza germs and placing a huge, oversized purple virus on top, the cars have become beacons for discussion about flu prevention and care. Every element, from the wrap to the color and shape of the crowning virus is designed to make us approachable. We can’t go anywhere in our Flu Bugs without people stopping us to talk, or to take pictures or to ask us to come to an event in their community.

We also called up Captain Quidel to help us in our quest. Captain Quidel’s super power is attracting people to have conversations about flu prevention and flu testing to make sure they are treating the ‘right’ disease.

Soon we’ll have the dynamic online flu map to help us battle influenza. Later this year Quidel will be releasing the tool, enabling the public and healthcare professionals to track influenza in their counties, their state and the country. Consumers will be able to track the virus’ spread and doctors will be aware of influenza hot spots.

Business Results

Our word of mouth marketing annual results to date:

- 29,110 Face-to-Face conversations
- Our program generated more social media traffic in a day than the company experienced across all product lines the previous year
- 108,432,000 follow on conversations

Our job isn't finished. Quidel's overall goal is to eradicate flu deaths. This requires a long-term commitment to educate people on the true nature of influenza, help them understand it is a serious disease and what they can do to prevent it from spreading. We also want to increase the number of Quidel influenza tests used by physicians.

Fizz, on behalf of Quidel, is consistently showing up in unexpected places in a Flu Bug with Captain Quidel in tow, sharing our story with thousands of people curious to know what we are doing. From the moment the Flu Bug hit the road and Captain Quidel hit the streets, response from consumers has been overwhelming. We are being invited by at least two different people a day to share our story to groups of all sizes.

The social media response has been staggering. Quidel has experienced more social media posts since this campaign started in 2015. In fact, we have generated 90% of their organic posts. And the numbers keep growing.

There is much about our success we are not allowed to share because healthcare diagnostics is a very competitive business. However, we can say that the program was extended before we even finished the first year.

Defeating influenza. All in a day's work. Every day.