University of Wollongong
Research Online

Partnerships, Proof and Practice - International Nonprofit and Social Marketing Conference 2008 - Proceedings

Faculty of Social Sciences

2008

Cause Marketing Partnerships, Diffusion of Breast Cancer Awareness & the Komen Case

V. L. Vaccaro
Kean University

Publication Details

This conference paper was originally published as Vaccaro, V. L., Cause Marketing Partnerships, Diffusion of Breast Cancer Awareness & the Komen Case, Partnerships, Proof and Practice - International Nonprofit and Social Marketing Conference 2008, University of Wollongong, 15-16 July 2008.

Research Online is the open access institutional repository for the University of Wollongong. For further information contact the UOW Library: research-pubs@uow.edu.au

Cause Marketing Partnerships, Diffusion of Breast Cancer Awareness & the Komen Case

Abstract

First, this paper examines the growth of cause marketing. Then, an overview is provided of cause marketing partnerships used to increase awareness of the breast cancer cause by nonprofit organizations in the U.S. and in Australia Next, this paper discusses Diffusion of Innovation Theory, and is the first to apply this theory to cause marketing, with an analysis done in the specific context of The Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure, the largest breast cancer nonprofit organisation in the world. The rationale for selecting this particular organisation had the purpose of determining Komen's successful usage of partnerships, including cause marketing alliances, which can serve as an example for other nonprofit organisations. This paper provided new insights on the relationship of diffusion characteristics, cause marketing benefits and marketing strategies which can be of valuable assistance to nonprofit organisations to help achieve greater success in the future. In addition, recommendations are made for future research.

Publication Details

This conference paper was originally published as Vaccaro, V. L., Cause Marketing Partnerships, Diffusion of Breast Cancer Awareness & the Komen Case, Partnerships, Proof and Practice - International Nonprofit and Social Marketing Conference 2008, University of Wollongong, 15-16 July 2008.

This conference paper is available at Research Online: http://ro.uow.edu.au/insm08/9

Cause Marketing Partnerships, Diffusion of Breast Cancer Awareness & the Komen Case

Valerie L. Vaccaro, Kean University

Abstract

First, this paper examines the growth of cause marketing. Then, an overview is provided of cause marketing partnerships used to increase awareness of the breast cancer cause by nonprofit organizations in the U.S. and in Australia Next, this paper discusses Diffusion of Innovation Theory, and is the first to apply this theory to cause marketing, with an analysis done in the specific context of The Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure, the largest breast cancer nonprofit organisation in the world. The rationale for selecting this particular organisation had the purpose of determining Komen's successful usage of partnerships, including cause marketing alliances, which can serve as an example for other nonprofit organisations. This paper provided new insights on the relationship of diffusion characteristics, cause marketing benefits and marketing strategies which can be of valuable assistance to nonprofit organisations to help achieve greater success in the future. In addition, recommendations are made for future research.

Introduction

Cause-related marketing is a technique where the contribution of an advertiser to a cause is "linked to customers' engaging in revenue-producing transactions with the firm" (Varadarajan and Menon 1988, p. 60). Cause-related marketing is now more often referred to in industry and the media as simply "cause marketing." Benefits of cause marketing can include: brand differentiation, brand loyalty, positive impact on an organisation's mission, increased revenues and profits, support for research and development, enhanced relationships with a variety of stakeholders (e.g., consumers, employees, volunteers and community networks, corporations, media, government), enhanced visibility and reputation, enhanced credibility, and ability to build new and deeper networks (Cause Marketing Forum 2008a). After 25 years, cause marketing is not just growing in America, it is a global phenomenon; it is an important strategic marketing tool for corporations and nonprofit organisations throughout the world, with programmes also in Australia, the U.K., France, China (Daw 2006) and South Africa (Sparg 2008). According to the IEG Sponsorship Report, U.S. corporations will spend $1.5 billion on cause marketing in 2008, a 9% increase from $1.44 billion in 2007; in 1990, spending was only $120 million (Causemarketingforum 2008a). In 2007, the Cone Cause Evolution Survey found that: about one-third of U.S. adults are already taking social issues into account when they make purchases; 91% of Americans believe that companies should choose a cause that is important in their community; and 87% of Americans would consider switching to a brand associated with a good cause from their current brand, if the products are equal in price and quality - an increase of over 31% from 1993 when only 66% who were willing to switch (Moros 2007). Partnerships between corporations and nonprofit organisations are an inherent part of the business model for a successful cause marketing programme. By 2015, corporate do-gooding is expected to be "an integral part of mainstream consumer demand around the globe" (Seckler 2007, p. 9).

Contribution of this paper

The first objective of this paper is to provide an overview of the usage of cause marketing partnerships to increase awareness of breast cancer by nonprofit organizations in the U.S. and in Australia Next, this paper examines the case of the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure organization, and how it has achieved success using partnerships and cause marketing alliances. This is the first paper to apply a Diffusion of Innovation Theory framework to cause marketing and other marketing elements as related to the Susan G. Komen nonprofit organisation.

Cause Marketing & Diffusion of Breast Cancer Awareness by Nonprofit Organisations

According to David Hessekiel, president of the Cause Marketing Forum (a website about cause marketing promotions which offers conferences and workshops in the U.S.), "Breast cancer is the 800 pound gorilla of cause marketing. It has attracted a tremendous amount of corporate support. But it's also the first cause that faces the challenge of overexposure" (Singer 2005, p. G1). In the U.S., "breast cancer programs continually overshadow the promotion of and dissemination of information about heart disease" even though heart disease kills about 12 times more women than breast cancer every year (about 500,000 compared to 40,000)… the leading cancer killer in women (is) (actually) lung cancer" (Andruss 2006, p. 14). The Breast Cancer Action advocacy group started a counter-campaign and website "Think Before You Pink" (Thinkbeforeyoupink 2008) to educate consumers and organisations and provide objective information; the organisation recommends that campaigns change their efforts from awareness to the causes of breast cancer in order to find a cure (Marcotty 2006). There is no doubt that cause marketing campaigns for breast cancer organisations throughout the world have become highly popular and successful in countries from the U.S. to Australia. Since 1985, October is Breast Cancer Awareness month, with a proliferation of "pink" promotions (Marcotty 2006). In Australia, in both 2006 and 2007 in October, the "Think Pink" campaign included pink Tim Tams, pink caps for Mount Franklin bottles, a pink *The Sydney Morning Herald*, and a pink Opera House. In the U.S., hundreds of companies such as Ford, Avon and Campbell's Soup participate in pink promotions to raise money for the breast cancer cause. In 2006, there were pink products such as: soup cans, cosmetics, vacuum cleaners, irons, kitchen culinary products, golf balls, running shoes, and teddy bears (Marcotty 2006; Ward 2007; Cundiff 2006; Singer 2005). The U.S. Postal Service sold special Breast Cancer stamps, which raised $50 million for research (Andruss 2006). In Australia, the goals of the National Breast Cancer Foundation (NBCF), Australia's leading national not-for profit organisation, are to raise awareness and to raise enough money for research to fund a cure for breast cancer. Since the Foundation was started in 1994, it has funded $44.5 million in research funds and sponsored 168 projects. The organisation has a six-tier corporate partnership system, working with numerous corporations, including top Pink Diamond sponsors such as David Jones, Target, Osram, and News Ltd. (NBCF 2008; Robertson 2006). Corporate partnerships for NBCF have risen from $210,000 in 2001 to $2.33 million in 2006, with $10 million raised in 2005-2006 for research (Robertson 2006).

In the U.S., there are over 700 breast cancer organisations (Peres 2005). The biggest, privately funded nonprofit organisation is the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure (formerly known as the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation) (Peres 2005, Komen 2008). The next sections

provide a discussion of Diffusion of Innovation Theory (Rogers 1983) and its application to the marketing efforts of the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure organisation.

Diffusion Theory & The Komen Case

Diffusion of Innovation theory examines the adoption of new products and services over time through a social system (Rogers, 1983), with multi-disciplinary applications, from sociology to business. Early research studied farmers' decisions to adopt agricultural innovations (Rogers 1962), and expanded to include diffusion of health-related innovations (e.g. Houston 2002, Gibbons 2007). Marketing-related studies have looked at product innovations (e.g., packaged goods, personal computers and solar energy systems) (Gatignon and Robertson, 1991), high technology industrial and consumer products and services (e.g., Danaher, Hardie and Putsis 2001; Hsu and Mesak 2005, Vaccaro and Cohn 2007), marketing in social service agencies (Stoner 1986), and diffusion of a pediatric care innovation in a nonprofit health care system (Barth and Hansel 2003). Diffusion of Innovation theory has found that certain characteristics of products or services generate consumer acceptance and increase the rate of adoption. Five product/service characteristics influencing the rate of diffusion have been identified: 1) relative advantage, 2) compatibility, 3) observability, 4) complexity, and 5) trialability (Rogers, 1983). Relative advantage is the degree to which a product/service is perceived to be superior to existing products (Rogers, 1983). Compatibility represents the degree to which the new product/service is consistent with existing values and practices. Observability represents the ease with which the attributes and benefits of a product/service can be seen and communicated (Rogers, 1983). Products or services with social visibility diffuse more rapidly. Complexity is the degree to which a new product/service is difficult to use or understand. The easier a product or service is to understand and use, the faster it will be adopted. Trialability is the ability of a product/service to be tested on a limited basis. The greater the trialability, the faster a product/service will be adopted. Diffusion characteristics have been extended to include such topics as social relevance (which is related to compatibility, observability and social value) and marketing programme design (marketing mix variables) (Gatignon and Robertson, 1991).

The rationale for using diffusion theory to apply to the Komen organisation case is that the Komen brand name and the cause of increasing breast cancer awareness and fundraising for research can be considered to have diffused successfully throughout the U.S. and continues with global expansion. In part, this success has been accomplished by establishing strong partnerships with groups of volunteers and other nonprofit organizations. Moreover, success has also been achieved mainly by continuously promoting the Komen brand over the past 25 years via hundreds of cause marketing partnerships and promotions with major corporations that have products compatible with the volunteers and survivors' values. The following analysis presented in TABLE 1 shows the relationship of diffusion of innovation characteristics, cause marketing benefits (mentioned earlier in the Introduction section), and the marketing strategy elements of Komen's success as the largest, private, nonprofit organisation for breast cancer in the world.

Table 1: Relationship of Diffusion, Cause Marketing Benefits & Komen Marketing

Diffusion Characteristics	Cause Marketing Benefits	Komen Marketing Strategy
Relative Advantage **&** **Marketing Programme**	• Increased Revenues • Brand Differentiation & Brand Loyalty • Fulfill Mission • Increased Research & Development (R&D) support	REVENUE: $238 million; Largest nonprofit breast cancer organization in world. PRODUCT/BRAND: 25 year presence and high brand awareness PROMOTION: 125+ major cause marketing corporate partners PLACE/DISTRIBUTION: 125 affiliates 15,000 communities TARGET MARKETS: 100,000 volunteers many who are survivors MARKETING MANAGEMENT expertise: Long term commitment, and consistency of operations. Strong marketing initiatives. Expert marketing executives & Work with outside expert marketing firms on website and promotions. RESEARCH: over $500 million raised for research. Donated 14.8 million for international research, $5.5 million for international community education
Compatibility **& Social Relevance**	• Enhanced relationships with Stakeholders: Consumers, Employees, Volunteers, Government agencies, and Media.	PRODUCTS/SERVICES & PROMOTION: Pink cause marketed products for women, consistent with values. Programmes such as Passionately Pink for the Cure for communities, Circle of Promise for minorities, Mission Conference. Komen Co-Survivor Programme for family and friends who support patients.
Observability	Enhanced visibility of organisation's message.	PROMOTION & DISTRIBUTION: Media Publicity (hundreds of ad impressions and media appearances). Excellent Website (uses Oracle, XML, and other companies to support it). Tours on campuses, in malls, at athletic events, and festivals. Proliferation of pink ribbon product sales.
Complexity **&** **Trialability**	Enhanced credibility Build new and deeper networks	PROMOTION: Easy to navigate website. Toll-Free bilingual phone # Transparency of CRM partner programmes. Easy to learn about info. Easy to partner & volunteer "Race for the Cure" events

Analysis & Discussion

According to the Komen website, the organisation is considered "the world's largest grassroots network of breast cancer survivors and activists fighting to save lives, empower people, ensure quality care for all and energise science to find the cures" (Komen 2008). In regards to the diffusion characteristic of relative advantage, it is apparent from TABLE 1 that Komen has many organizational strengths. In regards to size, the organisation's annual revenue in 2006 was $238 million (Oracle.com 2008). The brand name of Komen has been marketed successfully for over 25 years to differentiate it and establish brand loyalty, with the help of its corporate cause marketing partnerships. As a nonprofit, the Komen organisation has harnessed cause marketing with over 125 corporate partnerships with major firms such as Ford, BMW, Lean Cuisine, Newman's Own and Yoplait. In 2005 alone, the cause marketing programmes raised about $31 million (Andruss 2006). Komen also employs top marketing executives and hires outside marketing consulting firms to create top-of-the-line programmes and promotions, including the management of its user-friendly, constantly updated website (Kelleher 2007, PR News 2008, Komen 2008). In reference to the benefit related to research and development, the results of hundreds of successful cause marketing programmes and promotions and other marketing efforts have helped the organization to raise a large amount of money for research. In the past 25 years, the organisation invested almost $1 billion to fight breast cancer, with over $500 million going to research for treatment and to find a cure (Andruss 2006). In the U.S., there are 125 local affiliate

chapters in more than 15,000 communities, with (Andruss 2006) The organization currently has affiliates in Germany, Italy and Puerto Rico, with plans for further global expansion and has provided over $14.8 million in funding for international breast cancer research and more than $5.5 million for international community education and outreach programs (Komen 2008). In September 2007, Komen sponsored a global summit with breast cancer advocates attending from over 25 countries; in October 2007, the organisation launched Susan G. Komen for the Cure Global Initiative for Breast Cancer Awareness across Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East, and work with local organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, and Russia (Komen 2008). In summary, the diffusion characteristics of relative advantage is related to the organization's brand name, long-term presence in the market, size and its strong marketing initiatives including hundreds of cause marketing relationships and campaigns, which have resulted in competitive advantages of high revenues, strong brand loyalty, active participation by survivors, volunteers and consumers, and high revenues that are used to help fund research for the cause. Compatibility and social relevance were found to be related to the benefits of enhanced relationships with stakeholders. With cause marketing, consumers "want to buy brands that resonate with their values (Cause Marketing Forum 2008b). In addition, pink ribbon and products are consistent/compatible with consumers' self-image, with most of the products being for women. In regards to cause marketing, the female consumer's "connection to Good products (is related to) the consumer feel(ing) closer to her idealised view of herself" (Kelleher 2007). Also, the communications (including the information on the Komen website) reflects the philosophy "where people are valued and treated with dignity, respect ...fairness…compassion and integrity" (Americas greatest brands 2006, p. 2). Komen has numerous programmes for a variety of target markets (e.g., cancer patients, their families and support groups). Observability can be related to the cause marketing benefit of enhanced visibility of an organisation's message. With Komen, this is achieved through frequent press releases about its cause marketing promotions and programmes to achieve positive publicity coverage on a regular basis in news media (especially on the Internet, newspapers and magazines, with some local television news coverage. PR News March 24 2006; PR Newswire Dec.12, 2007; Aug. 20, 2007). In addition, the organisation also conducts tours around the U.S. to educate and inform communities about the disease and about resources that are available using the Komen on the Go touring vehicle which also helps to gain publicity and media coverage (PR News March 24 2006; PR Newswire Dec.12, 2007; Aug. 20, 2007; Americas greatest brands (2006). By making all of its marketing communications easy to understand and to learn about (e.g., its user-friendly website, toll-free information services), and its programs easy to join (e.g. volunteers, patients seeking support groups and treatment information), Komen has a "lack of" complexity, and high level of trialability of its services. The cause marketing benefits that are related to these accomplishments include a high level of credibility with a variety of stakeholders, and success in creating new and deeper networks of people and organizations. In summary, all of the diffusion of innovation characteristics can be linked to the benefits of cause marketing programmes and to a variety of marketing strategy elements, including product, promotion and distribution, which ultimately help Komen to successfully fulfill its mission.

Future Research & Conclusions

Future research on cause marketing and nonprofit organisations could look at Sirgy's self-congruity theory (1992) and Belk's (1999) perspective of possessions and the extended self, as well as the antecedents of consumer attitudes toward cause marketing studied by Youn and Kim (2008). In conclusion, this paper provided an overview of the usage of cause marketing partnerships to increase breast cancer awareness by nonprofit organizations in the U.S. and in Australia In addition, the case of the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure organization was analysed from a marketing perspective including its successful usage of partnerships and cause marketing alliances. This paper is the first to apply a Diffusion of Innovation Theory framework to cause marketing. The paper provided new insights on the relationship of diffusion characteristics, cause marketing benefits and marketing strategies which can be of valuable assistance to nonprofit organisations to help achieve greater success in the future.

References

America's Greatest Brands (2006) www.americasgreatestbrands.com. Komen Case (accessed on 5 April 2008).

Andruss, P., 2006. 'Think Pink' awareness much higher than threat. Marketing News. Chicago: February 15, 2006, 40, (3). 14-16.

Barth, M.C., Sherlock, C.H., 2003. The diffusion of a pediatric care innovation in a large urban nonprofit health care system. Nonprofit Management and Leadership. San Francisco: Fall 2003. 14 (1), 93.

Belk, R., 1988. Possessions and Extended Self. Journal of Consumer Research, 15, 139-168.

Breast Cancer Action advocacy group (www.bcaction.org)

Cundiff, R.. 2006. Cause marketing. Knight Ridder Tribune Business News. Washington: Oct 29, 2006, 1.

Causemarketingforum (2008a) www.causemarketingforum.com/page.asp?ID=81 and Causemarketingforum.com (2008b) www.causemarketingforum.com/page.asp?ID=82 (accessed 10 April 2008.

Daw, J., 2006. Cause Marketing for Nonprofits: Partner for Purpose, Passion, and Profits (AFP Fund Development Series) (The AFP/Wiley Fund Development Series)

Danaher, P. J., Hardie, B. G. S., Putsis Jr., W.P., 2001. Marketing-Mix Variables and the Diffusion of Successive Generations of a Technological Innovation. Journal of Marketing Research, 38 (November). 501-514.

Gatignon, H. and T. S. Robertson (1991), Innovative Decision Processes, in Handbook of Consumer Behavior, (ed) Thomas S. Robertson and Harold H. Kassarjian, Prentice Hall: New Jersey, 316-348.

Gibbons, D.E., 2007. Interorganisational Network Structures and Diffusion of Information Through a Health System. American Journal of Public Health. Washington: Sep 2007, 97 (9), 1684-1691.

Houston, H.R., 2002. Marketing tuberculosis prevention programmes to foreign-born Vietnamese: The role of culture in the effective diffusion of public sector health care services Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing. Binghamton: 2002, 10 (2), 1.

Hsu, M.K., Mesak, H.I., 2005. Government Programmes and Diffusion of Innovations in Taiwan: An Empirical Study of Household Technology Adoption Rates. Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing. Binghamton: 2005, 13 (1,2), 91.

Kelleher, K.A., 2007. 'Good' Matters to Consumers. Advertising Age, Midwest region edition, Chicago, December 10, 2007, 78 (49), 19.

King, S., 2008. Pink Ribbons Inc.: Breast Cancer and the Politics of Philanthropy. University Of Minnesota Press.

Komen. 2008. www.komen.org (accessed 11 April 2008).

Marcotty, J., 2006. Breast cancer tie-ins give firms rosy glow. Knight Ridder Tribune Business News. Washington: Oct 15, 2006, 1.

Moros, Y. 2007. The case for tying causes to corporate strategy. Retailing Today New York: Nov 12, 2007, 46 (17) 22, 2 pgs.

Nixon, R.,2008. Bottom Line for (Red)**.** New York Times. (Late Edition (East Coast)). New York, N.Y.: Feb 6, 2008, C.1.

National Breast Cancer Foundation (NBCF), www.nbcf.org.au (accessed 11 April 2008).

Oracle.com (2008) Oracle Customer Case Study Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation Expands Online Content with Self Publishing. Accessed 10 April 2008.

Peres, J., 2005. Pink pops up everywhere. Knight Ridder Tribune Business News. Washington: Oct 19, 2005, 1.

PR News Anonymous, 2008. CSR Pioneers: CSR Executives (2 Winners) TIE, March 24, 2008, Vol.64, Issue 12.

PR Newswire Anonymous, 2007. Susan G. Komen for the Cure Names Time Doke Chief Marketing Officer; Thirty-Year Communications Veteran Tasked with Expanding Opportunities

for People to Engage with the World's Largest Breast Cancer Organisation, New York, Dec.12, 2007.

PR Newswire, 2007. Susan G. Komen for the Cure Names Vice President of Development and Vice President of Marketing; Breast Cancer Global Leader Furthers Commitment to Diversity, Inclusion. New York, Aug. 20, 2007.

Robertson, S., 2006. Corporations give to the pink ribbon, B & T Weekly, Sydney, October 27, 2006, 7.

Rogers, E. (1983, 1995) Diffusion of Innovation, Free Press: New York.

Singer, N., 2005. Perplexing In Pink**.** New York Times. (Late Edition (East Coast)). New York, N.Y.: Oct 6, 2005, G.1.

Sparg, M. (2008). Social marketing – the next big thing in 2008. http://www.bizcommunity.com/Article/196/11/21177.html accessed 12 June 2008.

Seckler, V., 2007. Causes and Effect. WWD, New York, October 31, 2007, Vol. 194, Iss. 93, p.9.

Sirgy, M. J., 1992. Self-Concept in Consumer Behavior: a Critical Review. Journal of Consumer Research, December, 9, 287-300.

Stoner, M. R., 1986. Marketing of Social Services Gains Prominence in Practice. Administration in Social Work. New York: Winter 1986, 10 (4), 41-53.

Thinkbeforeyoupink.org

Vaccaro, V.L. and Cohn, D.Y., 2007. Global Consumer Values on the Internet & the Relationship of Diffusion Characteristics, Lifestyle & Trustworthiness to P2P File Sharing Behavior. International Journal of Business Research, VII, (2) 2007, (October), 176-186.

Varadarajan, P. R. and Menon, A. (1988), Cause-related Marketing: A Coalignment of Marketing Strategy and Corporate Philanthropy. Journal of Marketing, 52 (July), 58-74.

Ward, K., 2007. Pink is catching on. Knight Ridder Tribune Business News. Washington: Oct 22, 2007.

Youn , Seounmi and Hyuksoo Kim (2008) "Antecedents of Consumer Attitudes toward Cause-Related Marketing," Journal of Advertising Research, New York, March 2008, Vo. 48, Iss. 1, p. 123.