



## HeartRescue Project Inspires Virtual – and Real-Life – Heroes

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Exponent PR and The Medtronic Foundation's HeartRescue Project, Jan 1, 2013

**Summary:** 2013 Silver Anvil Award Winner — Marketing Consumer Services — Health Care Services

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) is a condition that occurs when the heart suddenly and unexpectedly stops beating. While SCA survival is bleak, when someone helps, chances of survival double. Exponent PR worked with the HeartRescue Project, funded by the Medtronic Foundation, to create an educational campaign featuring a unique online learning experience. The Save-a-Life Simulator allows users to learn how to save a life. More than 5.5 million people have visited HeartRescueNow.com and saved a virtual life since its April 2012 launch – surpassing the goal by more than 450 percent.

Marketing consumer services includes programs designed to introduce new services or promote existing services to a consumer audience.

### **Full Text: SUMMARY**

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) is a condition that occurs when the heart suddenly and unexpectedly stops beating. Most individuals who experience SCA die, often within minutes.

SCA is a leading cause of death in America, killing nearly 400,000 people a year. That's more than breast, lung, colon and prostate cancer combined.

Despite tremendous advancements in medicine, SCA survival is bleak. SCA has a 92 percent national death rate that has not improved in more than 30 years.

Thousands of people witness SCA every day, but few bystanders step in to help. This hesitancy is one reason why nine out of 10 SCA victims don't survive.

The HeartRescue Project, funded by the Medtronic Foundation, was created to improve how SCA is recognized and treated in the United States. Education about SCA and training on how to respond to SCA incidents are the key components of the program's mission.

Studies show the potential of survival rates double when people have seen a short video on CPR. However, many of those videos are outdated. Exponent PR worked with the HeartRescue Project to create an integrated communications campaign to increase awareness and traffic to an online learning experience that allows users to virtually learn how to save a life.

### **RESEARCH**

#### **Sudden Cardiac Arrest facts**

The HeartRescue Project partnered with medical professionals who are leaders in the resuscitation field. These experts conducted primary and secondary research to uncover insights that were used to define the program's objectives. The most compelling findings were used to create the HeartRescue Project's guidebook "Every Second Counts. Every Action Matter: A Community Response Planning Guide for Sudden Cardiac Arrest." The first-of-its-kind guidebook was unveiled at EMS Today, a conference for emergency medical services

personnel. SCA claims the lives of thousands of Americans each year.

Research shows:

- Witnesses typically stand by helpless and watch as victims fight for breath. In fact, fewer than 30 percent of victims receive bystander CPR.
- The most common reasons for bystander inaction are:
  - Lack of knowledge of what SCA looks like and fear of hurting the victim.
  - Diffused responsibility when other would-be responders are present
- When someone helps and reacts to SCA, the chance of survival doubles.
- A 2011 American Heart Association study found that laypersons exposed to very short hands-only CPR (a resuscitation technique without mouth-to-mouth contact) videos are more likely to attempt CPR than untrained laypersons.

### **Key Research Insights**

SCA death rates are staggering and unwavering. Yet SCA is treatable when proper response occurs. Working toward a mission to reduce SCA death, the HeartRescue Project was poised to educate people about this problem.

Many CPR training videos are lackluster and do little to help potential responders understand the in-the-moment choices they could face, even though literally every minute matters during an SCA event.

## **PLANNING**

Key research findings from the guidebook served as an impetus to launch the program, leading to the question: What if compelling information was available from the bystander's point-of-view?

### **Objectives**

1. Build awareness of the need to respond to SCA, teaching the basic response steps using compelling, yet brief content
2. Train one million individuals on how to respond to an SCA incident.

### **Target Audience**

To address these challenges, the Medtronic Foundation leveraged its partners within the EMS community to build the program's credibility and generate interest by including these influencers in the dialogue.

The foundation also targeted culturally influential adults, ages 18 to 29 – the media savvy, highly connected and culturally aware segment of the population who often help define trending topics and cultural norms.

### **Strategies**

- Simulate the frightening life-or-death moments of SCA versus a highly clinical, typical training video using a dummy that doesn't seem real.
- Work with a trained responder to coach actors to most accurately portray the victim's symptoms – as well as the responder's actions, showcasing three simple steps: *1. Call 911, 2. Start chest compressions, 3. Find and use an AED (automated external defibrillator).*
- Leverage a highly engaging, lifesaving site that offers visitors a reason to share
- Drive web traffic using a dramatic public call to action

## **EXECUTION**

**Strategy 1: Simulate the frightening life-or-death moments of SCA versus a highly**

## **clinical, typical training video using a dummy that doesn't seem real.**

Visitors to HeartRescueNow.com witness the chilling moments surrounding an SCA through a compelling, choose-your-own adventure format.

The website features the Save-A-Life Simulator, an immersive, online experience that engages visitors rather than passively presenting educational data like previous training videos. The chilling video footage depicts a man suddenly collapsing in a mall and then presents bystander choices that will determine whether the victim survives. Each real-life response takes the bystander further into the scenario and illustrates the proper steps.

### **Strategy 2: Work with a trained responder to coach actors to most accurately portray the victim's symptoms – as well as the responder's actions, showcasing three simple steps:**

1. Call 911.
2. Start chest compressions.
3. Find and use an AED.

A trained EMS responder was on the set of the video shoot to ensure each actor used proper CPR technique and AED usage to ensure viewers would see correct response protocol for each step. She also coached the victim actor to imitate the “gurgling” and wheezing sounds that are a result of the victim's agonal breathing. The responder's role was to create the most realistic representation possible of a real-life SCA event and response.

### **Strategy 3: Leverage a highly engaging, lifesaving site that offers visitors a reason to share**

The Simulator was designed to be shareable so that more lives would be saved as more people are educated on how to respond. The site encourages users to share via Facebook, Twitter and Google+.

### **Strategy 4: Drive web traffic using a dramatic public call to action**

A corresponding Public Service Announcement (PSA) shows the visually-arresting footage of the individual collapsing at a busy mall. Everyone notices, but no one responds. The crowd slowly disappears from the scene, one-by-one. A harrowing voiceover states: “Every day thousands of people suffer from Sudden Cardiac Arrest. Would you know how to help - or would they be all alone?” The proper action appears on the screen:

1. Call 911.
2. Begin chest compressions.
3. Find and use an AED.

Viewers are then urged to visit [www.heartrescuenow.com](http://www.heartrescuenow.com) to learn how to help.

The integrated campaign was introduced to the EMS community, including leading resuscitation doctors and medical staff, through trade shows and media relations. Consumer media outlets and influential bloggers were also reached through targeted outreach.

## **EVALUATION**

The Simulator bridges the gap between classroom training and a real crisis. It has become a viral sensation. More than 5.3 million people have visited HeartRescueNow.com seeking information about SCA response since its April 2012 launch – surpassing the goal by more than 500 percent.

### **Objective 1: Build awareness of the need to respond to SCA, teaching the basic response steps using compelling, yet brief content.**

- More than 5.3 million people engaged with the site to learn the basic response steps,

which were continually reinforced through visual and verbal cues.

- Media outreach mentioning the tool garnered nearly 300 million traditional and social media impressions, including:
  - 13,900 confirmed telecasts on 150 TV stations; reaching an estimated 272,258,997 viewers; and obtaining a value of air time of \$1,039,328.
  - PSA viewership is more than 400 percent above average PSA viewership levels
  - 70 percent of website visits are direct traffic (instead of search or referral), proving the PSA is driving viewers to the site experience.
  - Media coverage has been widespread and includes TV news in top markets (like *NBC Chicago*), daily newspapers (including *Star Tribune*) influential bloggers (such as *EmpowHer*) and medical trades (e.g. *EMS World*)
  - Key messages were highlighted in 100 percent of coverage.

**Objective 2: Train one million individuals on how to respond to an SCA incident.**

- The 5.3 million people who interacted with the site, are twice as likely to save a life
- The HeartRescue Project continues to make a difference. Today, HeartRescueNow.com attracts thousands of unique visitors each week.

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