

## Philips Norelco Beard Wars

---

Emanate and Philips Norelco, Jan 1,2013

**Summary:** 2013 Silver Anvil Award of Excellence Winner — Marketing Consumer Products — Non-Packaged Goods

In early 2012, Philips Norelco was threatened by competitors encroaching on the brand's category leadership. To protect market share, Philips Norelco needed to drive preference among males ages 25-35. Philips Norelco leveraged an NHL sponsorship and partnered with retired hockey pros and internet comedy darling Funny or Die to insert Philips Norelco into their male target's conversation – and media jetstream – around a key grooming moment in time: "playoff beards." The campaign garnered nearly 100 media placements and 500+ million impressions in key men's and sports outlets, spurring social media engagement and doubling purchase intent among the target.

Marketing consumer products includes programs designed to introduce new products or promote existing products to a consumer audience. The non-packaged goods subcategory refers to consumer products, such as clothing, appliances and furniture.

### **Full Text: PHILIPS NORELCO BEARD WARS: OVERVIEW**

In early 2012, Philips Norelco was faced with competitive threats, where new product launches and splashy celebrity campaigns from competitors were encroaching on its category leadership. In order to protect market share, Philips Norelco needed to drive preference for its shaving and grooming products as the brand of choice among males ages 25-35. The challenge was getting this target to pay attention to and talk about personal grooming, a topic not often discussed regularly or openly with peers. However, there are certain moments when beards and shaving are culturally relevant to this target and part of their naturally occurring conversations – during the NHL playoffs, for example. OneVoice (OV) understood the humorous, irreverent way in which this target, dubbed "comedy natives" by Nielsen Entertainment Television research, communicates with each other and knew that any discussion of "playoff beards" would have to be approached with a comedic tone. OV leveraged an existing brand sponsorship with five NHL teams (New York Rangers, Detroit Red Wings, St. Louis Blues, Nashville Predators and Pittsburgh Penguins) and brokered a partnership with internet comedy darling Funny or Die and hockey legends Jeremy Roenick and Mike Modano to a) gain entre to their desired male target and b) seamlessly insert Philips Norelco into a naturally occurring conversation – and media jet stream – around a particular grooming moment in time. The campaign objectives were to:

- Drive preference over competitors by positioning Philips Norelco as the brand of choice for all men ages 25-35, regardless of their facial hair style; as measured by consumer research
- Generate awareness and consideration of the Philips Norelco line of products and spark conversation around the brand, grooming and hockey with media and fans; as measured by target-relevant media impressions and increased social media engagement

### **RESEARCH**

Shifting away from the industry's typical, stylized communication around male grooming, Philips Norelco partnered with Funny or Die and two hockey pro legends, Jeremy Roenick and Mike Modano, to create a video series that spoofed the storied playoff beard tradition. OV identified Roenick and Modano as key partners for this campaign because, though both retired, each was still highly relevant to the target and had strong traditional and social media appeal. The team engaged with Funny or Die due to their multi-channel reach and popularity with the target, while keeping in mind that Nielsen research showed that 58 percent of target forwards funny videos to make an impression on others. Additional research included analysis of Elias Sports Bureau data to surface key bearded/shaved player moments that could inform media pitches.

## PLANNING

OV used its proprietary planning process, **P.L.A.N.**, to create the campaign.

- **P** (Problem): Make current blade users try and switch to Philips Norelco electric shaving and grooming products.
- **L** (Learning): Shaving is not often discussed among target, but on those rare times when it is, it's usually in a humorous light.
- **A** (Aha – Insight): Leverage the pro hockey playoffs time period when beards *are* commonplace conversation to engage with the target who is actively involved in growing and maintaining playoff beards.
- **N** (iNnovation): Spoof the hockey playoff beard tradition (all tactics would ladder up to this innovation).

OV developed a multi-phased media strategy to deliver campaign messages throughout the entirety of the playoffs. It leveraged hockey team partnerships to create fan and player engagement events, and push out campaign messaging and video content. To gauge campaign effectiveness and outcomes, OV prepared a post-campaign questionnaire for a consumer survey.

## EXECUTION

Shifting away from the industry's typical, stylized communication around male grooming, Philips Norelco partnered with Funny or Die and hockey pro legends, Jeremy Roenick and Mike Modano, to create a video series that spoofed the storied playoff beard tradition. Beginning with the launch on April 9, 2012, the campaign inserted the brand into conversations where beards are already being talked about – the hockey playoffs – and brought it into the consideration set of guys who are actively involved in growing and grooming beard.

**Team partnerships** with New York Rangers, Detroit Red Wings, St. Louis Blues, Nashville Predators and Pittsburgh Penguins were announced in April 2012, along with a **teaser video** about a Roenick and Modano rematch. Behind-the-scenes Funny or Die photos tweeted out by Roenick and Modano drove intrigue and conversation around Philips Norelco and playoff beards. The launch also coincided with a co-branded **NY Rangers “Final Shave” event** that drove local media coverage (see below for event info).

Together with Funny or Die, OV created “The Playoff Beard Follies,” a [three-part video series](#) spoofing on playoff beards that starred Roenick and Modano. The Playoff Beard Follies followed Roenick and Modano in a series of video shorts that celebrated the ritual of hockey playoff beards. No one takes their beard more seriously than a hockey fan during the playoffs so it provided a great backdrop for Philips Norelco to reinforce its “real tools for real guys” point of differentiation.

OV implemented a **robust media outreach strategy** to launch the campaign and drive buzz throughout the hockey playoff season, which included spokesperson interviews with national and local print, online and broadcast media. OV conducted research with Elias Sports Bureau

to surface key bearded/shaved player moments that offered interesting data for media to create a grooming story around. In addition, the brand maintained ongoing engagement with media and consumers via [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) to seed the Funny or Die videos, amplify key media coverage and leverage team news/events.

The campaign was **amplified through social media extensions**, including:

- *Community Engagement*: Conversations with hockey fan influencers with strong social media presence and targeted Twitter outreach around Funny or Die videos to sports journalists.
- *Blogger Challenge*: Challenged key dad/guy bloggers to give up their blades during the playoffs and switch to Philips Norelco electric grooming products to maintain their playoff beards. Reviews were extremely positive and many bloggers switched to “Team Electric” post-challenge.
- *“Hairiest Stanley” Twitter contest*: Philips Norelco leveraged its strong Twitter following to honor the best playoff beards. Followers uploaded pictures of their beards for a chance to win Norelco prizes.

Leveraged the brand’s playoff team partnerships to **drive preference** in key **local markets** through **on-site grooming events** that connected with fans and encouraged trial at experiential pre-game events; used the teams’ social media channels to promote the partnership and disseminate content to fans.

- *Launch of New York Rangers charity Beard-a-Thon*: Final shave event prior to the playoffs with Rangers legend Rod Gilbert at Madison Square Garden. Fans, players and media came to celebrate one last shave before the growing their playoff beards.
- *On-site grooming activations* at fan-fest events for *Nashville Predators* and *St. Louis Blues*.
- Celebration of the *LA Kings’ championship* win by teaming up with all-star player Dustin Penner to let fans choose what beard style he should sport for the victory parade. Fans voted on for how Penner should groom his iconic playoff beard, followed by a live shaving of the winning style at Bolt Barbers in LA in front of media like E! and local LA broadcast affiliates.

## RESULTS/EVALUATION

*Objective 1: Drive preference for Philips Norelco; as measured by consumer research.*

Consumer research demonstrated that exposure to Philips Norelco PR during the campaign period significantly increased brand familiarity, consideration and purchase intent.

- Those exposed to the Beard Wars campaign were nearly twice as likely to say they intended to purchase a Philips Norelco product (45.8%) than those who were not (22.5%).
- There was strong PR penetration with an association between the Philips Norelco brand and hockey, and recall of Philips Norelco online and in magazines.
- Philips Norelco content generated around sports was effective at reaching men. Of those exposed to PR, one in five had heard about the Philips Norelco-sponsored sports statistics on athletes with beards and almost as many made the connection between Philips Norelco and the NHL (19%).

*Objective 2: Generate awareness for, consideration of and conversation about Philips Norelco; as measured by 1) target-relevant media impressions and 2) increased social media engagement.*

- During the campaign period of April 9-June 30, Beard Wars garnered nearly **100 media placements** and **more than 500MM impressions** in key men’s and sports outlets. Funny or Die video series generated **more than 180K views**, primarily driven by major media coverage.
- Philips Norelco’s Facebook engagement experienced a 32% increase and its

@ShaveExperts Twitter handle saw a 471% increase in mentions, a 214% increase in re-tweets and a 5% increase in Twitter followers.

---

Public Relations Society of America © 2013

**Product #:** 6BE-1307G08