



Secret Deodorant - Mean Stinks Challenges Girls to Gang Up for Good

Marina Maher Communications and Procter & Gamble, Jan 1, 2013

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

Secret, whose mission is female fearlessness, furthered their *Mean Stinks* movement against the “stinky” bullying epidemic by asking girls to take positive actions and ‘Gang Up for Good.’

Mean Stinks drove relevance and credibility by partnering with music sensation Demi Lovato to cut through the increasing bullying coverage and Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center to develop an anti-bullying curriculum and help stop bullying before it starts. As online communities grew, engagement rose, including 3,500 girls taking the brand-ownable blue pinky swear and the new Mean Stinks Clinical Strength became the best selling Anti-Perspirant/Deodorant in Target during the first month on-shelf.

Marketing consumer products includes programs designed to introduce new products or promote existing products to a consumer audience. The packaged goods subcategory refers to traditional consumer products sold in packages, such as food products, pet products, household goods, toiletries and cosmetics.

Full Text: SITUATION ANALYSIS

Secret Deodorant’s mission is to help women of all ages live *fearlessly*. But a key Secret target, teen girls, today face a rising issue that challenges their fearlessness: bullying. As a brand that stands against everything that “stinks,” from odor to meanness, Secret created *Mean Stinks*, a purpose-driven program that built an emotional connection with teen girls and their moms by giving girls the courage to stand up to bullying.

In the first year of the campaign, *Mean Stinks* was focused on encouraging girls who had been bullies in the past to apologize for their behavior on Facebook. Nearly half a million girls joined the *Mean Stinks* page and created a robust anti-bullying conversation and community. The integrated *Mean Stinks* campaign was largely responsible for brand sales increasing by an impressive 8 percent in 2011.

In 2012, Secret launched a new product tied to the campaign, Secret Mean Stinks Clinical Strength and expanded the *Mean Stinks* mission by challenging teen girls to “Gang Up for Good” and prevent future bullying. We focused program messages where girls encounter bullying the most – at school. Working with a high-profile spokesperson who discussed her past struggles with bullying and an ownable call-to-action that resonated strongly with our target, MMC and Secret reached **tens of thousands more girls, inspired more than one million actions of ‘good’ and connected the *Mean Stinks* mission directly to sales**. Secret Mean Stinks Clinical Strength, launched in August, 2012, was the **best selling anti-perspirant deodorant (APDO) in Target stores** during the first month on-shelf. Although the *Mean Stinks* campaign ended in October, **sales to date are \$1.5 million**. In addition, the *Mean Stinks* campaign spurred **sales of the product portfolio by two percent** vs. the previous year.

RESEARCH

The target for the Mean Stinks program, women age 13-21, is:

- **TECHNO-SAVVY WITH HIGH SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT.**
 - Teens are three times as likely to exchange information via technology, with 19% of teen WOM occurring online vs. 7% among the population as a whole according to Teens Online [research](#) by Keller Fay.
 - 80% participate in Facebook and Twitter are part of her daily life.
 - 71% say “it’s ok for brands to be on Social Networks.”
- **A FREQUENT SWITCHER OF BRANDS:** But can develop life-long loyalty to products she connects with when she first enters the market.
- **INFLUENCED BY MOM AND FRIENDS:** Moms often buy APDOs and can reinforce her brand selection.
- **DISPOSED TO BRANDS THAT SUPPORT RELEVANT CAUSES.**
 - 85% think positively about product that supports a cause they care about.
 - 79% are likely to switch brands associated with a good cause.

To ensure we were engaging the target and the media they consume on a topic that would resonate, MMC conducted primary and secondary research on the bullying epidemic and found:

- An astonishing 30% of female students in grades 6 – 12 were bullied at school or cyberbullied, according to a U.S. Department of Justice [report](#).
- Bullying was rated by teens as the number one issue in their school in a [TRU®](#) study, the global leader in tween & teen research.
- Our target strongly supports anti-bullying causes. In an online survey of 1,001 women age 16-21:
 - 99% agree bullying stinks.
 - 96% are concerned about seeing a person being bullied and no one doing anything to help.
 - 94% agree social media makes it easier for girls to bully one another; 87% said social media also can be used against bullying.

MMC’s media audit concluded that the topic of bullying is of high interest to influential media. In fact, a key media challenge in 2012 was ballooning interest in the topic, hindering our ability to break through with an ownable story. Lady Gaga’s *Born This Way* Foundation, which encompassed anti-bullying messages, launched in 2011 as did the movie *The Bully Project*. Brands from Sears to Tenda Zap and Soap & Glory took-on anti-bullying as their cause platform and coverage of bullying increased 28 percent between 2011 and 2012, particularly in high profile media outlets. To break through the clutter and drive high word of mouth and awareness for Secret *Mean Stinks*, we needed to partner with a celebrity who had an authentic bullying story as well as a campaign message the brand could own.

PLANNING: OBJECTIVES

- **Drive sales:** Drive sales of new Secret Mean Stinks Clinical Strength.
- **Turn words into actions:** Drive consumer engagement via meaningful actions that support ‘Gang Up for Good’ rally cry.
- **Drive awareness and elevate:** Continue to drive brand and *Mean Stinks* program awareness while elevating *Mean Stinks* from an anti-bullying champion to a reputable, trusted source for bullying education and support among girls and their moms.

PLANNING: STRATEGIES

- Insert *Mean Stinks* into timely and relevant pop-culture and anti-bullying conversations to fuel influencer and consumer interest.
 - Own back-to-school timing to credibly deliver the *Mean Stinks* message in advance of National Bullying Prevention Month in October, cluttered by other anti-bullying organizations.
 - Leverage notoriety of a celebrity relatable to our target, whose personal bullying experience can inspire & educate.
- Increase program visibility and credibility by leveraging anti-bullying partnerships.
 - Utilized content and actionable tools from bullying expert Rachel Simmons and Cincinnati Children's Hospital.
 - Release a steady stream of news and content to spark conversations with teens, both on- and off-line through multiple media touchpoints with celebrity ambassador and experts.
- Create and leverage an ownable, iconic call-to-action to differentiate Secret *Mean Stinks* from other anti-bullying campaigns

MMC and Secret developed the *Mean Stinks* 'blue pinky swear' call-to-action, the color of peace and the Secret brand, that tapped into the increasingly popular DIY nail trend among the target. We recommend working with singer- actress Demi Lovato, whose profile was elevated last fall as a judge on the *X Factor* and had an authentic bullying story to tell.

EXECUTION / TACTICS

Connect to sales:

- Launched new Mean Stinks Clinical Strength SKU to target teen and women's beauty and lifestyle media via a creative delivery with drive to P&G eStore purchase. Seeded blue pinky swear program call-to-action.
- Linked sale of Secret Mean Stinks Clinical Strength with Girls on the Run through a purchase donation to fund their girl empowerment programming and help to prevent mean behavior before it starts.

Inspire actions/engagement:

- Relaunched updated *Mean Stinks* Facebook page that included in-depth bullying education and a quiz to identify the role girls play in a bullying scenario. We drove engagement through the *Mean Stinks* program pledge and the blue pinky swear call-to-action. Consumers were directed to e-retailers and P&G eStore links to purchase the product.

Drive awareness and elevate program profile:

- Own back-to-school anti-bullying conversation to announce year two of *Mean Stinks*. During week one of the '12/'13 school year, Demi Lovato made a surprise appearance at an all girls school anti-bullying assembly. Demi took the blue pinky swear, which has been continuously leveraged through social channels. Bullying expert Rachel Simmons followed Demi's appearance with a presentation to more than 70 9th grade girls.
- Leveraged Demi Lovato's authentic bullying experiences and personal passion for the cause within earned media coverage, in videos & photos and through cross-promotional posts from her fan pages on Facebook, Twitter & YouTube.
- Conducted Demi Lovato media day with key teenage lifestyle and beauty media contacts to bring timely relevant conversation back to brand and 'Gang Up for Good' movement.
- Worked collaboratively with ad agency to develop/launch MeanStinks.com as an online

destination for girls to access in real time to share their advice, experiences and how they're 'Ganging Up for Good' with each other, read expert tips from Rachel Simmons and interact with inspiring content (Gang Up for Good challenges, visuals, videos & Demi Lovato content).

- Formed relationship with leading researchers on youth social aggression at CCHMC to develop an anti-bullying curriculum currently being piloted in select schools to further the Mean Stinks movement and ultimate goal of ending girl-to-girl bullying.

EVALUATION OF SUCCESS / MEASUREMENT

- **Drive Secret sales among teens:** Although the *Mean Stinks* campaign ended in October, **sales to date are \$1.5 million**. In addition, the *Mean Stinks* campaign spurred **sales of the product portfolio by two percent** vs. the previous year.
- **Inspire engagement:** Program to-date has generated more than 3,500 pinky swears, more than 3,100 girls who took the Facebook quiz, 14% growth in Facebook fans and 2200% growth in Twitter followers.
- **Drive awareness & elevate profile:** Mean Stinks Clinical Strength SKU, Demi Lovato/year two announcement media day and Oct. Natl. Bullying Prevention Month Demi interviews have generated 717.7 million media impressions with 70% key message inclusion in top-tier outlets including: People.com, E! News, Access Hollywood, Extra, Rachael Ray, *WWD*, *New York Daily News*, *US Weekly*, MTV.com, Huffington Post Celebrity, MSN Wonderwall, AOL Music, Just Jared, Hollywood Life, Seventeen.com, TeenVogue.com, Nylon.com, Yahoo OMG!, Pop Sugar, She Knows & Beauty High.com.

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