



## Thanks To You Campaign

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PRR, Inc. and Pike Place Market Preservation and Development Authority, Jan 1, 2013

**Summary:** 2013 Silver Anvil Award of Excellence Winner — Community Relations — Associations / Nonprofit Organizations

Seattle voters passed a 6-year tax levy to repair the 105-year-old infrastructure of the Pike Place Market. The Market engaged PRR to implement a campaign to show appreciation for the generosity of Seattle taxpayers and key supporters, and the patience of tenants and residents. The campaign relied on media relations, social media, partnership outreach, and a public installation detailing the repairs made. At the conclusion of the month-long campaign, nearly 3 million people were reached through: 47 media stories; 10,000 brochures; partner engagement including the Seattle Sounders FC; an online video; two special events; customized thank you cards; and more.

Community relations includes programs that aim to improve relations with, or seek to win the support or cooperation of, people or organizations in communities in which the sponsoring organization has an interest, need or opportunity.

### **Full Text: RESEARCH**

#### **Situation**

Pike Place Market is a downtown Seattle institution. Without the Market, Seattle would be a considerably less interesting place. The fish mongers throwing their salmon overhead. Buskers singing their hearts out. The fruit vendors handing out fresh slices to visitors. The original Starbucks with a constant line out the door. The hidden gems of artistry that fill the day stalls. And yes, all of the food.

That's why Seattle voters overwhelmingly passed a six-year tax levy in 2008 to complete repairs and renovations to their beloved, but aging, 105-year-old Pike Place Market. Undeniably, this vote gave the Market a new lease on life. The work required a facelift that would preserve and improve the structure without changing the unique elements that have defined it, and the city of Seattle, for over a century. Though the preservation and improvements were by-and-large invisible, except to the discerning eye, the four-phased renovation required three years of demolition, large-scale construction equipment, scaffolding structures, and road blocks that occupied the Market and left key audiences (Seattle residents, tenants/residents of the Market and key supporters) feeling detached and displaced from their historic institution.

With an incredibly lean budget of \$45K (funded using the public's tax dollars from the levy), the Pike Place Market Preservation and Development Authority (PDA) partnered with PRR in 2012 to clearly, but inexpensively mark the completion of the work, thank key audiences for their support and educate them on the outcome of their levy vote to strengthen and improve the Market.

#### **Defining the problem with research**

To appropriately plan an integrated campaign that would meaningfully reach each target audience, PRR implemented a series of qualitative, primary-research studies that observed and

surveyed key stakeholders in the Pike Place Market community.

The research methodology included:

- Interviews with the key stakeholders within the Pike Place Market Preservation and Development Authority
- Observational consumer research to survey the behavior and opinions of Market consumers post-renovation
- Observational vendor research to survey the behavior and opinions of Market vendors post-renovation

Key findings from the qualitative research results included the following:

#### *Observational Consumer/Vendor Research*

- The tenants and residents are a sensitive group, since they lived/worked through three years of renovations that left some of them displaced
- The majority of Seattle voters were not aware of specific improvements made during the three-year renovation
- The general public's sentiment toward Pike Place Market was very positive
- The public wanted to make sure that any education on the renovations was efficient as it was funded by their tax dollars

#### *Executive Interviews*

- The three audiences that needed to be reached were:
  - **Seattle voters**
  - **Market tenants and residents**
  - **Key stakeholders**
- Within the sensitive tenant and resident audience, residents of the Stewart House apartment building held negative sentiment regarding the renovations, because they were displaced

## **PLANNING**

### **Defining the objectives and behavioral outcomes:**

This research crystallized three key points to inform our objectives:

1. Outreach needed to be incredibly targeted.
2. Outreach needed to be done in such a way as to show that the Market was a good steward of the public's finances.
3. Outreach needed to be "surround sound" in that multiple channels were used to reach the campaign's multiple audiences simultaneously.

These conditions ruled out paid media as an option, as the campaign needed to come across as more of a grassroots effort.

We decided that a mix of media relations, social media, partnership outreach, and a public installation at the Market would enable the campaign to effectively and efficiently reach all three audiences.

### **Defining the target audience**

Major components of the renovation were due to be completed in April 2012. In anticipation the Market recognized the need to communicate a heartfelt "thank you" to several key audiences. We developed the messaging and materials for each of these audiences based on feedback from our research and kept them as simple and straightforward as possible to appeal to all audiences and clearly communicate the "thank you" message. The focused messages were:

- **Seattle voters:** There's only one Pike Place Market. Thanks to you, we'll be here for generations to come.

• **Market tenants and residents:** Without you, we wouldn't be us. Thanks for your support!

• **Key stakeholders:** We're better than ever because of you. Thanks for your support!

**Budget:** The budget for the campaign was \$45,000 and included all research, planning and implementation costs. The following objectives informed the budget:

**Objective #1:** Generate and ensure awareness and understanding of the renovation, by securing consistent coverage of campaign messaging through in-Market signage and local accurate "surround sound" media coverage secured in at least one newspaper, one online outlet, one TV news station and one radio station.

**Objective #2:** Engage with at least one influential partner organization within Seattle to engage their loyal audiences with campaign messaging.

**Objective #3:** Cultivate at least 75 percent positive sentiment regarding the renovation through the use of social media engagement.

## EXECUTION

### Tactics:

PRR's integrated campaign was designed to reach out to targeted audiences repeatedly over the course of a month-long campaign, and included the following tactics:

- Media relations (development of press materials, media outreach, implementation of media event and media evaluation)
- Produced the "Thank You, Seattle" video communicating the "thank you" message directly from Market vendors to consumers
- Facebook social media promotion
- An outdoor installation with accompanying pamphlets (what was the outdoor installation?)
- Partner engagement (to extend the resources of the campaign)
  - On the Jumbotron at Seattle Sounders games (Seattle's Major League Soccer team – average in stadium attendance of 38,000 fans per game), a :30 version of the video ran during the Sounders broadcast buy
  - Downtown Seattle Association street teams handed out pamphlets for one week
- Printed thank you cards, invites and pin cards were distributed to the public (all materials designed by PRR)

### Challenge:

The timing and budget of the campaign were the primary challenges. PRR and the Market were given six weeks and \$45K (tax dollars) to plan, research, and implement this campaign, which needed to reach three unique audiences with sensitive messaging.

## EVALUATION

**Exceeded objectives:** This campaign was extremely successful by securing **2,703,806 impressions**. Despite only **six weeks** to establish the campaign strategy and execute tactics, the Seattle community heard Pike Place Market's "thank you" loud and clear. This campaign was highly visible and exceeded our campaign objectives.

Objectives	Results
Generate and ensure awareness and understanding of the renovation, by securing consistent coverage of campaign messaging through in-Market signage and local	<b>We exceeded our objective by 91 percent</b> in securing 47 stories across print, online and broadcast (TV + radio). This included photo and full write ups in the <i>Seattle Times</i> , <i>Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce</i> , <i>Puget Sound Business Journal</i> , KING-TV's (NBC) <i>Evening</i>

accurate “surround sound” media coverage secured in at least one newspaper, one online outlet, one TV news station and one radio station.	<i>Magazine</i> , KPLU (local NPR - radio), SeattlePI.com and many others. In addition, specialty signs were installed throughout the Market giving voice to the renovations and educating the public (see the Execution tab, then the Installations section).
Engage with at least one influential partner organization within Seattle to engage their loyal audiences with campaign messaging.	PRR secured two partnerships, reaching nearly 164,000 consumers within the Seattle voters target audience.
Cultivate at least 75 percent positive sentiment regarding the renovation through the use of social media engagement.	With just 6 weeks and a small expenditure of tax dollars, we achieved an 80 percent positive sentiment rating, using social media metrics, towards the taxpayer renovations that disrupted daily life, but, in the end, led to a greater permanence for this Seattle treasure. (See the Evaluation tab, then the social media sentiment score sheet for more details.)

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