

TMP – CAUSE AWARDS – STEPTEMBER – BEST USE OF INNOVATION

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AWARD CRITERIA:

You will be asked to enter a **written entry plus two optional images.**

If you are shortlisted you will be asked to provide a **two-minute video reel, plus an optional 30-second video reel** (to be used at the award ceremony if the campaign wins a Gold trophy).

Submissions **should not include entering company or contributing company names and branding.**

Campaigns may be entered in more than one category. It is advised to adjust your written entry if you intend to do this as judges will be looking for different information in each category.

BEST USE OF INNOVATION:

The jury will be looking at how innovation has driven a cause campaign for people to deliver a significant change, impact, raise awareness and educate. Judges will be looking at the success of the tech that has been implemented, or introduction of a clever and creative pilot scheme to deliver results. This could be as part of a start-up, social enterprise or social venture.

THE WRITTEN ENTRY:

Objectives: Please state the cause and marketing objectives of the campaign, outlining the former first. This is to provide the jury with key context of the campaign. (250 words max)

Globally, Cerebral Palsy is the most common childhood motor disability and within Australia, cost of cerebral palsy is estimated expenditure of \$1.47 billion per year of which an estimated 37% is borne by the person / family. To aid much needed research for this debilitating disorder, STEPtember is an annual fundraising event that challenges people to STEP UP during the month of September. In solidarity with those living with Cerebral Palsy, the event invites the Australian corporate sector (as well as the public) to walk 10,000 steps each day with the individuals and companies participating encouraged to call on their networks to donate funds for their stepping efforts.

STEPtember 2021 occurred during some of the toughest COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns Australia had experienced with many high-density areas subject to military and police control. The economic uncertainty of the time resulted in a conservative media investment, making the fundraising targets more difficult to reach than ever before.

The campaign needed to achieve:

- \$11.1M Total Revenue
- 84,000 Total Participants
- \$7M Total Net Revenue

As well as the lofty participation and revenue goals, the campaign needed several adjustments in terms of internal client processes, campaign coordination and participant experience, including:

- Updated communications platforms for the client team to collaboratively manage the customer marketing journey in house with the agency

- Revamped STEPtember website and digital architecture including community management across a new Facebook social hub
- More effective data and reporting tools for campaign optimisation
- A revised segmentation model focused on participant motivations

Insight: What was the insight which helped the entrant inspire and implement the campaign? How did the entrant identify the cause they implemented in the campaign? (250 words max)

The beauty of STEPtember lies in its democracy. Regardless of age, gender, creed or ability, there is a way to participate whether one donates individually, appeals for support from their peer network by stepping in solidarity with those living with Cerebral Palsy or engages their community online to push awareness of the event and advocate to raise funds.

Given the nature of STEPtember, the perils of COVID-19 put the 2021 campaign in serious jeopardy. On our side was that there were no limitations as to how participants could engage physically, with over 40 activities registered that could count towards participant's daily step count - people could walk, skip, swim or even ping pong to reach their daily quota. The perceptions of participation from both the client, the agency and the public's perspective needed to be altered.

After much deliberation, it was clear that the strategic framework and revised consumer journey needed to be underpinned by one core truth:

Everybody *steps* differently.

Whether it is doing 300 burpees in your living room, showing your support through a selfie with another participant or sharing your company's leader board across LinkedIn: promoting and celebrating these alternate means of engagement were paramount to campaign success. As well as advocating for monetary contributions, the 2021 campaign needed to build a virtual community around STEPtember as participants and their networks engaged with the event across digital platforms.

This approach influenced the collaborative, real-time data led approach to strategy, leading to unprecedented success across the board.

Strategy: The communications strategy, how does your strategy meet the business objectives listed above? (300 words max)

An unwavering dedication to data intelligence enabled the campaign to adapt to severe COVID-19 lockdown conditions and appeal to individuals, teams, and community groups, consolidating STEPtember as Australia's 2021 leading virtual-wellness fundraising event.

Innovative use of first-party data was at the forefront of audience segmentation which led to fundraising growth amongst the participant clusters that were formed. Participant behaviours from previous campaigns informed four major audience segments, grouping people based on their ability to raise funds, how they engage with the STEPtember franchise, their motivations for participation and their influence on others within their community. These were identified as:

- Networkers – motivated by being first/better than everyone else
- Underdeveloped – motivated by participation and doing better/good
- Influencers – motivated by the success of the wider team/organisation

- Numbers – passive engagers unlikely to be motivated by anything

At the heart of these data driven segments was an innate understanding of why participants fundraise, how individuals donate and how they interact with the STEPtember movement. Balancing the statistics with the emotional motivations that drive involvement within the STEPtember community, the campaign was strategically poised to connect meaningfully.

From here, a personalised framework of connection points was developed to structure a tailored communications journey for each participant from registration to completion. This work married first-party data-based understanding with emotional triggers and informed how the campaign approached:

- Business As Usual
- Behaviour & Motivation
- Influencers
- Gamification
- Donation
- Post STEPtember Wrap-Up

With the refreshed revenue goals, client processes, campaign coordination and participant experience in mind, the overarching creative and media strategy was split into four distinct phases:

- Corporate Onboarding (July 1 to July 19)
- Acquisition & Reengagement (July 20 to September 1)
- Participation (September 1 to October 1)
- Donation & Advocacy (September 1 to October 1)

Execution: The creativity of the communication and activation or delivery. If applicable, please describe the different steps of the campaign's execution and what happened. (250 words max)

Complementing broader above the line awareness pieces – real-time digital optimisation, including introducing new audience targeting, and daily 'on-the-fly' creative adjustments were the culprits for success throughout the four phases of execution. New audience learnings were developed daily, contributing to a campaign evolution that successfully navigated its way through different scenarios such as 'severe lockdowns in Western Sydney' through to 'Dollar Match Day.'

Client and agency teams consistently reviewed overnight campaign results and audience reactions to constantly optimise. This allowed the campaign to adapt and innovate across four key areas:

1. Developing new targeting audiences based on registration, participation, fundraising or donation values
2. Moving key activations depending on the need to drive awareness or donation at different campaign stages
3. Shaping copy and image direction based on audience reactions to content, moving away from or leaning into pandemic conditions
4. Using EDM open rates and app usage to build an extensive suite of dynamic advertising modules and optimised gamification icons and graphics

Of all areas, the most effective real-time shift in comms was targeted towards incomplete registrants. Reverting to emotional messaging focused on the real need for funding for people living

with Cerebral Palsy incited behaviour change amongst this group, driving participant conversion as well as self-donation concurrently. This reduced incomplete registration levels from 37% to 18%.

Attention to detail and a strong appetite for innovation ensured that the STEPtember 2021 campaign fostered community and drove engagement from the outset, leading to phenomenal campaign growth YoY across all key metrics.

Results: What did the campaign achieve? What did it achieve from a cause/purpose perspective? What was the impact of the campaign on the cause it was helping or raising awareness about? What were the metrics used to measure the impact? What did this campaign also achieve from a marketing perspective? How did deliver against the objectives laid out above? (350 words max)

The proof is in the numbers. We used first-party data-driven insights to understand the importance of the language used in our advertising and the audiences we were targeting from the outset. We ensured the insights derived infiltrated all STEPtember campaign communication verticals, using real-time data to shape media targeting, creative messaging, and other marketing communications harmoniously.

Motivation learning led to increased fundraising opportunities such as:

- Runners had 45% activation rates and raised average \$445 versus \$75 per walker
- Those specifically requesting their funds went to Equipment & Services raised twice as much as those who specified research

This detailed, analytical approach to STEPtember ensured the end-of-campaign results far exceeded 2021 targets: with total revenue growing by 64% on last year and participant fundraising activation increasing by 16%. Participant satisfaction and engagement year-on-year is demonstrated through a retention rate increase (+27%), exceeding the campaign benchmarks for the year. STEPtember 2021 not only defied expectations but redefined the campaign's potential - overall, the ROI significantly increased year-on-year (4.8 vs 2020's 3.0).

The campaign refined the new brand strategy and platforms put in place in 2020, improving the participant journey, revamping the website and social communities, utilising more effective approach to using data and reporting tools, and building an intimate understanding the audience motivations for participating in STEPtember through more advanced segmentation. While COVID-19 created different challenges in 2021 as various states, regions and LGAs were subject to different lockdown measures, the STEPtember campaign reiterated the need to support those living with Cerebral Palsy even when the pandemic was at its most dire, emotionally connecting directly to those experiencing some of the most severe lockdown conditions.

This was a detailed, data-driven, rational approach to advertising within a highly fickle and emotional category. The success of this campaign was due to innovative first-party data management that shaped audiences and creative alike. With a +64% lift in funds raised year-on-year, the success of this campaign is undeniable. The campaign's ability to encourage thousands of Australians to reconsider the privileges of their day-to-day, despite being locked inside, is further testament to the effectiveness of STEPtember 2021.