

CASES

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Cases Proceedings Editorial

W. Douglas Evans, Ph.D.

Welcome to the first supplemental edition of *Cases in Public Health Communication and Marketing*, the *Proceedings* issue! This edition of *Cases* consists of papers based on presentations given during the 2008-09 George Washington University (GWU) symposium series. The 2008-09 series focused on global and domestic US public health communication and social marketing in four subject areas: Water & sanitation, HIV/AIDS testing, new & social media, and branding. The first three of these areas are represented by papers in the current volume.

As in all *Cases* volumes, the papers published in this supplement were peer reviewed and follow journal editorial standards and guidelines. Eligible contributors were individual presenters at the 2008-09 GWU symposium series, which included 10 speakers in all. Each presenter was invited to submit their work and five papers were ultimately accepted for this volume.

The papers assembled in this volume represent a variety of applications of social marketing in each of three subject areas,

across a broad range of global settings. First, lack of clean drinking water and poor sanitary conditions represent the largest single source of morbidity and mortality in the developing world. But supply driven approaches, such as government-led building and installation of toilets in households, have largely been ineffective. Marketing strategies are needed to create demand for products, and to change individual and cultural norms, in order to effect healthy water consumption and sanitation practices.

Jacqueline Devine reports on the current situation in marketing of sanitation programs in the developing world. She discusses demand driven approaches that use social marketing to change social norms and encourage adoption of sanitation among poor households as a best practice. She characterizes these approaches as 'emergent' sanitation marketing and describes the World Bank program in East Java that exemplifies the strategies.

Focusing on water treatment solutions, Dan Borapich reports on a pilot project to

socially market a diarrhea treatment kit (DTK) branded OraselKIT® including both oral rehydration solution (ORS) and zinc. The purpose of the DTK is to treat water to prevent diarrhea, a leading killer of infants and young children among the poor in developing countries. This paper describes the use of combined interpersonal and mass communication strategies to fit the local media and cultural contexts, and evaluation of the OraselKIT® which showed high levels of consumer support for the product and suggested future directions for marketing and research.

In the area of HIV/AIDS testing, one of the biggest challenges is promoting positive norms and reducing stigma associated with HIV testing. Social marketing has tremendous potential to change entrenched belief systems related to HIV testing and to build trust in testing. As a marketing tool, social networking is among the most promising strategies for reach high risk audiences, such as young people, by changing norms and perceptions of the acceptability of testing across a large and distributed population. Social media platforms, such as networking sites like Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter, have not been adequately explored as venues for social marketing campaigns. As major commercial marketers such as Proctor & Gamble and Coca-Cola have discovered, social media can be a powerful new tool to build customer relationships. Future social marketing campaigns and research can do the same for public health.

Jennifer Uhrig and colleagues report on results of an online study about the current state of knowledge, attitudes, beliefs about, and utilization of, the Internet as a tool to search for HIV information. Not surprisingly, young people use the Internet as their

main source of health information, and they are using social networking for HIV and other health topics. But their willingness to use Facebook, MySpace, Twitter and similar tools depends in large part on relationships, such as friend or fan status, with the information source. Building these relationships and understanding how users view online sources as reliable and trusted is central to changing young people's social norms and utilization of HIV information.

Finally, this volume presents case studies of how social and mobile media are being used in social marketing. In developed countries like the US, social media have become a predominant form of communication, and marketers recognize it as the fastest growing way both to reach consumers with messages through advertising but also to create buzz about brands. In developing countries, most consumers do not have computer-based Web access, but have mobile phones and social marketing platforms are increasingly using text messaging and other mobile strategies to reach them. These efforts may converge in the near future with the rise of low cost smart phones, creating new opportunities to transfer strategies between global social marketing platforms.

Terry Long and colleagues report on the use of social media in the Heart Truth® campaign, which seeks to raise awareness about women's risk of heart disease. While Heart Truth® began in 2002, before social media's dramatic rise to widespread use, it consistently has had a strong Web presence. In 2007, the campaign shifted to a focus on what the marketing team called 'social media marketing' (SMM), including not only direct consumer-consumer communication through networking, but also social web (eg, Wikipedia) and 3D virtual appli-

cations (eg, Second Life). This integrated strategy, along with extensive co-branding with major consumer brands such as Diet Coke, have led to a widely recognized Heart Truth® social marketing brand.

Jamaica Corker reports on the Population Services International (PSI) *Ligne Verte* (toll-free hotline) program to disseminate family planning information in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). While created as a traditional hotline resource, *Ligne Verte* quickly recognized the growing prevalence of cell phones in DRC and developed partnerships with local providers such as Vodacom and Zain to support the service. In part through sales of socially marketed

family planning products in its *Confiance* line, PSI subsidizes costs for calls coming through local mobile providers, allowing mobile callers to effectively utilize the service. Corker reports that of more than 20,000 annual calls, the majority are from mobile phones.

Each of these programs provides lessons to the field on how social marketing can be used effectively across subject matter and global settings. They show both where the field is at present and where new technologies and strategies are leading. We hope you enjoy the inaugural *Proceedings* volume of *Cases*.