

The logo for the CIPR PRIDE AWARDS 2019 Gold Winner. It features the text 'CIPR PRIDE AWARDS 2019' in white on a black background, followed by 'GOLD WINNER' in large, multi-colored letters (pink, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple).

Category: Low Budget Campaign

Company: Conscious Communications and British Nutrition Foundation

Entry title: Portion Sizes

Brief and objectives:

Around 1 in every 4 adults, and 1 in every 5 children aged 10 to 11 in the UK are clinically obese. Obesity is a leading cause of type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, stroke and some cancers, and a huge burden on society and the NHS. It is a result of consuming more calories, than you burn off and, as such, is almost entirely preventable, yet its prevalence has grown to epidemic proportions.

The British Nutrition Foundation (BNF) had developed guidance on how often and in what portion sizes to eat foods from the main food groups, in order to maintain a healthy weight and a balanced diet. The guidance was based on research already in the public domain and was in-line with official advice widely available from Public Health England.

The BNF needed to deliver its portion size guidance to as many consumers across the UK as possible, and planned to publish reference materials for consumers to download from its website.

The idea, research and planning:

Consumers are bombarded with dietary advice, yet portions size is something we don't give much thought to. The amount we put on our plates typically depends on the portion sizes we are used to consuming, how hungry we feel, and how much we are usually offered as a helping at a restaurant or in a ready-meal.

Existing advice on portion sizes is not easily put into practise and many people find the burden of converting food measurements into actual meals impractical.

Based on this insight, two sets of consumer focus groups were staged to help determine the mechanism for communicating practical and easily actionable portion size advice, and core design elements of the BNF's guidance materials. Conscious Communications (CC) consulted with the BNF and its design team and the idea of using a human hand – open palm, fist, thumb to finger-tip round – to illustrate the appropriate portion sizes of particular foods was devised.

This was coupled with everyday spoon measurements to provide two highly visual and practical ways for consumers to compare portion sizes.

Strategy, tactics, creativity and innovation:

CC's strategy was to bring the portion size guidance to life, visually, and target top tier national media directly through one-to-one briefings and with personalised portion size hampers.

The hampers, which included individually measured and packaged portions of foods – breakfast cereal, baking potatoes, pasta, peanut butter – and a personalised tablespoon, in a wicker picnic basket, were delivered to named journalists' desks, along with an embargoed press release and BNF portion size materials.

Prior to launch, CC developed video content for use on social media to amplify the media relations campaign. Videos featured everyday people comparing portion sizes and making good/bad portion size choices, and step-by-step videos of correctly portioned meals being assembled, to give consumers a visual reference point. All video content was filmed, edited, captioned and branded in-house by CC to keep costs to a minimum. Still images from the videos were used in the media relations activity.

Primary media targets were defined as national and regional news – broadcast, print and digital, lifestyle and women's interest, consumer health, and retail, catering, processing/manufacturing food trade. Media targets were prioritised in terms of reach and audience influence and grouped into four tiers, and a bespoke mechanism for recording and evaluating media coverage was devised for the effective measurement of campaign results and efficient reporting.

Delivery:

CC prepared a core press release to launch the BNF's consumer reference materials, which the team tailored to appeal to the different target media.

The media desk-drops, one-to-one briefings, press release distribution and proactive sell-in were all carefully coordinated to allow time for media to plan their editorial, request further information and images, and request interviews with the BNF team. Social media content, including the video footage, was provided to the BNF for posting from the BNF on Twitter and Facebook during launch week.

Proactive sell-in to the media secured multiple broadcast interviews which were both recorded and scheduled for live broadcast on the designated launch day. CC worked with the BNF's nutrition spokesperson to manage the interview schedule.

Measurement and evaluation:

CC's media relations campaign achieved a total of 264 pieces of editorial coverage across the target media. Notable national media coverage (print, online and broadcast) included

BBC Breakfast, BBC News Online, Sky News, The Guardian, Daily Mail, Huffington Post, Metro, Evening Standard, national and local radio stations.

Using the bespoke measurement mechanism devised by CC for the BNF, the impact and influence of each piece of coverage was calculated: 49% of coverage achieved an impact ranking of five (the top rank attributed to national and international media). Nearly a fifth of all coverage was secured in top priority publications and the campaign had a total audience each of 261,509,254, with 52,569.822 unique users.

Anecdotal feedback from journalists was that they appreciated receiving the personalised hampers - The Guardian enjoyed the hamper delivery so much that the journalist removed its contents, photographed the food items and created her own image which appeared on a double page spread in The Guardian print edition.

Budget and campaign impact:

Preparation for the portion sizes campaign spanned two months and fees were charged at £3,500. Costs totalled £292.11 for the hampers and delivery, making a total budget of £3,792.11

Consumer response to the media relations campaign resulted in over 150,000 unique views and over 45,000 downloads of the portion size resources from the BNF website.

The one-to-one briefings conducted on the BNF's behalf have helped CC to build strong relationships for BNF with important target media, including the health editor of BBC News.

Bridget Benelam, Nutrition Communications Manager for the BNF said: "We were delighted with the level of coverage gained for the portion sizes resources, which is one of the most successful media campaigns the BNF has ever run. The hampers sent to key journalist were a great idea, which really paid off in the coverage in the Guardian and making an important connection with Sarah Boseley."