Category: Community Relations Campaign

Company: Wire

Entry title: Bloody Big Brunch

Brief and objectives:
“One in five women in Scotland struggle to afford menstrual protection, and instead use alternatives like socks and rags every month,” were the words of The Guardian article that struck a chord with the Wire team early 2018.

Shocked to discover that this figure related to women in our community, we decided to throw the weight of the agency behind this cause. We restructured our time and assigned roles to launch the very first Wire owned campaign – the Bloody Big Brunch.

Our core objectives were to:

1) Widen the flow of conversation around periods, break down the taboo and capture the attention of new audiences

2) Bring together campaigners across the UK to work together and strengthen the pressure on community leaders to provoke change

3) Give people an easy and fun way to find out more and make a difference

4) Create something newsworthy that would get local and national media talking about the issue

Rationale behind campaign, including research and planning:
The scale of this issue was global– over 1.2 billion women across the world do not have access to basic sanitation, and in the UK, a 2015 survey suggested that women spend more than £18,000 on period products in their lifetime.

We knew our first challenge was to tackle our own community, so we reached out to two of the biggest campaigners on the issue in Scotland - Victoria Heaney, the researcher behind the startling statistics, and MSP Monica Lennon. We discovered that education on menstruation in schools is poor, talking about periods is still taboo, and while there were lots of people around the UK talking about the issue, they weren’t working together to align on the cause.
With no client to charge, we’d have to be strategic – working smartly to best use all of our resources, contacts and skills.

**Strategy and tactics, including creativity and innovation:**

Our creative solution was the creation of the Bloody Big Brunch – a nationwide travelling brunch event where Bloody Marys are served up all day long – but there’s one string attached. They can only be ‘bought’ in exchange for menstrual products, which we donate to local charities.

Using a real luxury – brunching with a cocktail in hand – allowed us to make noise about the faux-luxury of menstrual health products. By creating a safe space for people to discuss menstruation freely, in which they can also easily donate to women in need, our brunches dial up to the bigger fight to eradicate period poverty nationally - keeping the pressure and momentum going.

**Implementation of tactics:**

Our approach had four key pillars:

- **Events**

  We created a calendar of brunch events in the coolest venues around the UK, kicking off in Glasgow for International Women's Day then heading to London for Menstrual Hygiene Day – each one an empowering celebration, with a guest list of activists and influencers, alternative entertainment from drag to DJs, with Bloody Marys, Instagram moments, donation points, and of course brunch on the menu. Next up is Manchester in August, followed by Edinburgh in October.

- **Partnerships**

  With an extremely limited budget, local partnerships were essential. TV presenter Jenny Bede and drag queen Beyoncé lookalike Cara Melle hosted for a reduced fee and we invited local community campaigners to receive donations. We pitched our idea to Smirnoff who jumped at the opportunity to become our official sponsor in London.

- **Media relations**

  We devised a tailored media strategy of punchy press releases and controversial imagery – stretching the issue of period poverty across hard news outlets and glossy mags over a three-month period. We secured a place on a live radio roundtable with politician Monica Lennon on BBC Scotland Kaye Adams Show, a livestream interview on Glasgow Live and national coverage across print and online like London Evening Standard, Glamour and Grazia.
• Social/Influencers

We established our own social channels to drive the brand and launched a two-pronged influencer approach. As well as uniting the existing campaigners together like Bloody Good Period and Red Box Project, we secured high profile influencers across TV and the arts, such as Outlander star Steven Cree, Marcella’s Victoria Broom, and Kidulthood’s Noel Clarke as new advocates for the cause.

While Bloody Big Brunch continues its travels around the UK, a nationwide call for households to host their own brunches on one dedicated ‘Bloody Big Brunch day’ is in the pipeline for the end of 2018.

**Measurement and evaluation:**
Period poverty is a hard news issue but we wanted to bring it to the forefront of a new audience through glossy mags and TV influencers. We aimed to:

- secure hits in three glossy mags
- unite existing campaigners under our campaign
- engage five high profile influencers who wouldn’t typically be associated with the topic
- deliver national coverage

We smashed our targets:

- 51 pieces of national coverage across print, online and broadcast with over 306million OTS
- Consumer title hits including BBC News, Huffington Post (x2), UK Metro (x2), Stylist and The Sun
- Over 60 engaged influencers - more than six period poverty campaigners uniting to raise awareness of the campaign– including Fifty Shades writer E.L James, Harry Potter star Katie Leung and members of the England Women’s Rugby team
- Over 1,000 followers across owned social channels in under three months
- 2,000 sanitary products donated,
- 300+ attendees at two events
- MSP Monica Lennon raised a motion in parliament recognising Bloody Big Brunch as part of her bill to change Scottish legislation
- Over 500 Bloody Marys served up to a contemporary audience of new activists

The campaign even inspired us to create a Diversity Board dedicated to agency-owned projects for important causes, ensuring all the work we produce has a diverse voice.

**Budget and cost effectiveness:**
All costs were our own, so we dedicated a limited budget of £2000 for the first two events. 16 partnerships later, we made that budget stretch across brand design, photography, event venues, entertainment, tech equipment donations, staffing and ingredients.
We rallied all of our contacts in entertainment, hospitality and tech across the UK to work alongside us to support the cause pro-bono.

Safe to say our Bloody Mary bribes paid off.