

To: Dr. Sudnick
From: Marilyn West
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Re: Nonprofit Rebranding Analysis

Background

In 1980, a 7-year-old boy named Christopher James Greicius was battling leukemia. He wanted to be a police officer and with the help of Tommy Austin and the Phoenix community, his wish came true. Unfortunately, Chris lost his battle with leukemia a few days after being sworn in as a state trooper. However, Tommy Austin used Chris' wish as inspiration for the creation of Make-A-Wish. The mission of Make-A-Wish is "Together, we create life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses" (Make-A-Wish Foundation of America, 2021, para. 2). Today, Make-A-Wish has granted more than 500,000 wishes with chapters all over the United States along with Make-A-Wish International in more than fifty countries on five different continents.

After eighteen years, Make-A-Wish went through a global rebrand in 2018. As stated by Rule29, the design agency who handled the rebrand, "Make-A-Wish realized the organization had grown beyond the logo and identity they created back in the late 1990s. Make-A-Wish decided it was time to create a fresh, energized look that truly reflects the scope of this global brand" (Rule29, 2021, para. 2). The rebrand allowed Make-A-Wish to truly step into the global brand that it has become while receiving input from chapters, affiliates, wish families and potential donors.

Long-term focus

Make-A-Wish has maintained its long-term focus by using integrated marketing communication while giving its stakeholders public clarity and integration. Arnett, Fritz, and McManus stated, "Content, brand, stakeholders, and customers shape direction and response to the marketplace, recognizing that IMC dwells within art that unites emotion and some rational allegiance to a given brand" (Arnett, Fritz, and McManus, 2018, p. 194). By having a very clear mission statement and organizational structure, Make-A-Wish has been able to continuously focus on the main reason it was created. This has also allowed Make-A-Wish to build relationships with donors, volunteers, medical professionals, families, and communities.

Make-A-Wish has used a wide array of communication methods to accomplish their long-term focus. Whether it be through their website, social media accounts, brand book, training, videos, events, newsletters, or online store; Make-A-Wish provides updated information and stories on how they have impacted the lives of the individuals that they have helped. These communication methods also provide resources on how a child could receive a wish. Arnett, Fritz, and McManus noted, "IMC is story-responsive, attending to context and creativity of application" (Arnett, Fritz, and McManus, 2018, p. 195). Make-A-Wish has painted a clear story across the globe while using its platforms to create user generated content for engagement with stakeholders.

Communication ethics perspective

Of the seven communication ethics approaches, Make-A-Wish fits the universal-humanitarian communication ethics approach. As Arnett, Fritz, and McManus noted, “A universal-humanitarian approach to communication ethics assumes a built-in guiding ethical principle that is part of human nature, protecting and promoting the good of duty and responsibility to human beings” (Arnett, Fritz, and McManus, 2018, p. 55). This relates to Make-A-Wish because the nonprofit protects and promotes life changing wishes for children with chronic illnesses. The wishes have not only an impact on the children that receive them, but on the families and surrounding community as well.

Make-A-Wish assumes that people will donate money, time, and resources to help bring wishes and dreams to life. Make-A-Wish speaks to the overall good within human nature and challenges it to do what is needed for the children with chronic illnesses, their families, and communities. Make-A-Wish connects to the very core of duty and responsibility each of us have within society.

Make-A-Wish protects and promotes strength, hope, transformation, and community. As stated on the Make-A-Wish website, “Research shows a wish can give kids the strength to fight against and even overcome a critical illness. A wish renews hope, uplifts spirits and encourages the belief in the impossible. A wish forever transforms the lives of children, their families, and entire communities. A wish unites neighbors, friends and entire communities in life-changing experiences” (Make-A-Wish Foundation of America, 2021, para. 3). Make-A-Wish creates memories and experiences that affect everyone involved.

The implications of this are that society realizes and connects to what is truly important in life. By sharing the stories of all the children who have received wishes, Make-A-Wish has left a lasting mark within this world. Research and theories can be applied to communication methods to see how the stories, training, and donations effect the integrated marketing communication methods. Other organizations and nonprofits could use Make-A-Wish as a model to create change worldwide.

References

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