

“Bringing the Value of Clean Indoor Air into Focus: The TRANE CleanEffects Story”

Situation Analysis

Consumer goods companies constantly try to generate market demand by making their products look, feel, smell, taste or sound better than those of their competitors. But how do you tackle the task if the product’s benefits are nearly imperceptible to the eye?

That was the challenge facing the public relations team behind the new TRANE CleanEffects™ air cleaning system. *How do you make the invisible visible?* How do you represent the potential danger of unseen pollen, dander, viruses, fungus, bacteria and dust mites? And how do you explain a breakthrough technology that removes 99.98 percent of those microscopic airborne particles?



Add to that, two additional challenges – consumers virtually unaware of possible indoor air quality (IAQ) issues in their homes, and a newly emerging category for this product in the HVAC market with competitors on the verge of announcing similar new products – and the stage is set for the launch of TRANE CleanEffects.

To meet these challenges, TRANE and Carmichael Lynch Spong (CLS) developed a multi-faceted educational campaign anchored in solid research. The goal: utilize research data points from credible sources as a platform from which to inform consumers about the dangers of poor IAQ, share the benefits of whole-home, electronic air cleaning systems, and, ultimately, help drive sales of TRANE CleanEffects.

The results? *The invisible was made visible.* More than 249 million media impressions have pushed TRANE 16 percent ahead of its competitors in unaided awareness; helped achieve the sale of more TRANE CleanEffects units than the rest of the industry combined; and aided a lead market share gain within the whole-home air cleaning category within six months of product launch.

Research

Objectives

1. Widen the gap between TRANE and its competitors in the HVAC/IAQ category
2. Educate consumers about IAQ and TRANE CleanEffects by generating 195 million gross media impressions
3. Double online traffic to TRANE.com to help increase interest and sales of TRANE CleanEffects systems

Primary and secondary research proved invaluable when planning and executing the launch of TRANE CleanEffects, providing multiple proof points from which to engage consumers, health professionals, and health, home and lifestyle media. Firmly grasping that today’s savvy consumer demands proof and validity surrounding any product claim, TRANE put consumers first and commissioned three independent research facilities to put the TRANE CleanEffects whole-house air filtration system to the test:

1. Harvard professors working at Environmental Health & Engineering (EH&E)
2. LMS Technologies
3. Professors working with a credible university in the Northwest (name withheld due to NDA)

Test results showing TRANE CleanEffects' superiority from a combination of these resource facilities were used in all communications materials, adding third-party credibility to messaging.

Further highlighting consumer mindset and shaping product key messages, a 2005 Gallup survey provided insights about consumers' attitudes and awareness surrounding indoor air quality (IAQ) and related issues to help further shape campaign messaging. Some of the insights gleaned include:

- 62 percent of people report household allergies as a problem
- Dust, dander and pollen are the leading particle concerns
- Homeowners' concern about IAQ is growing, but only 50 percent are somewhat/very concerned

Rounding out consumer-related research, TRANE engaged Nooro Research to measure brand awareness before and after the TRANE CleanEffects product launch.

To aid in product and brand differentiation, a research team at Carmichael Lynch Spong developed and executed a comprehensive competitive analysis. Key findings from this research were used to help define TRANE brand positioning within the emerging whole-house air filtration system category and to help elevate TRANE CleanEffects above the competitive set through product key messaging.

Methodology

Target Audience

To successfully meet launch objectives agreed upon between TRANE and Carmichael Lynch Spong, target audiences were segmented into primary and secondary categories:

Primary:

- Homeowners who suffer/have family members who suffer from allergies or asthma; HHI of 75,000+

Secondary:

- Health influencers (health care professionals and air quality experts)
- TRANE dealers and distributors
- National and local broadcast, home, shelter and health magazines; daily and weekly home and health editors; business reporters; wire service reporters and online media

Key Messages

The emergence of any new technology – especially within a new product category – brings with it potential roadblocks. In the case of TRANE CleanEffects, alienating potential customers with

technological drivel or mindless statistics was a potential hazard to the launch. Speaking passionately about the nearly invisible product benefits required finesse. Carmichael Lynch Spong worked closely with TRANE public relations, marketing and research teams to develop key messages that combined industry-leading product test results with the solid, educational verbiage to resonate with TRANE target audiences:

- TRANE CleanEffects removes up to 99.98 percent of allergens from all the air that it heats or cools
- TRANE CleanEffects is 100 times better than a traditional 1-inch filter
- TRANE CleanEffects was tested by LMS in the laboratory and EH&E under real-world conditions, then performance-verified by Harvard School of Public Health professors

Strategies

1. Educate and engage top health influencers and air quality experts as credible third-party advocates for TRANE CleanEffects
2. Execute a national media relations campaign about IAQ issues and TRANE CleanEffects as a consumer solution
3. Arm TRANE dealers and distributors with IAQ information and why TRANE CleanEffects is the best option – reinforcing influencer and media relations campaign to help increase sales

Execution

Strategy One: Educate and engage top health influencers and air quality experts as credible third-party advocates for TRANE CleanEffects

- Independent Study. Engaged Dr. Jack Spengler, Harvard professor and air quality expert, to develop a summary of the independent EH&E study linking back to independent research proving that TRANE was the leader and backed by facts
- Engage Dr. Germ. Provided research and information to New York University's air quality guru Dr. Philip Tierno. Dr. Tierno served as SMT/RMT spokesperson and key influencer
- One-on-one Influencer Education. Provided EH&E study results and hosted one-on-one phone meetings with the 15 most-quoted air quality experts and influencers
- Materials Development. Worked with Tierno's and Spengler's team to develop IAQ fact sheet and Clean Air Quiz to put technical issues into consumer-friendly terms for homeowners and media; linked to key consumer findings from Gallup survey
- PEOPLE Cover Wrap. Developed and distributed nine months of weekly issues of *PEOPLE* magazine with TRANE CleanEffects cover wrap featuring the Clean Air Quiz; sent to 3,100 influencer allergist offices to reach doctors and target consumers
- AANMA Partnership. Met with AANMA (Allergy and Asthma Network Mothers of Asthmatics) to develop ongoing partnership and information exchange, including benefits of TRANE Clean Effects; tied back to research that allergies are the main reason for improving home air quality
- Beta Families. Secured eight families in target cities to experience TRANE CleanEffects in their homes. Data and testimonials were used in media outreach and provided to dealers and distributors to use during home visits for potential customers. Real-life examples addressed research-based facts showing that homeowners don't understand air quality issues

Strategy Two: Execute a national media relations campaign about IAQ issues and TRANE CleanEffects as a consumer solution

- **Launch Event.** Making the invisible visible, the team created an experiential classroom in a New York City loft, where 55 media learned about the IAQ issues home-owners face via demos on how TRANE CleanEffects can remove 99.98 percent of particles and allergens
- **Media Kit.** Created and distributed TRANE CleanEffects media kit to top broadcast and print targets, including an animated “flip book” making invisible particles and allergens visible
- **Media Outreach.** Announced new product to business and national media during key allergy seasons
- **Clean Air Quiz.** Encouraged media and consumers to learn more about IAQ through the Clean Air Quiz; used in materials to drive them to TRANE.com to learn more

Strategy Three: Arm TRANE dealers and distributors with IAQ information and facts about why TRANE CleanEffects is the best option – reinforcing influencer and media relations campaign to help increase sales

- **PR Handbook.** Created a PR Handbook for 86 dealers and distributors to help them communicate and speak with one voice about TRANE CleanEffects
- **Tool Kit.** Made all public relations materials available via TRANE dealer/distributor intranet for easy access
- **Distributor Meeting Materials.** Hosted public relations/marketing sessions at the TRANE national distributor meeting and dealer meetings; created and distributed “Why TRANE CleanEffects” brochures summarizing in “dealer-speak” why the product is better than the competition

Detailed Results

Consumer launch exceeded all objectives

Objective One: Widen the gap between TRANE and its competitors in the HVAC/IAQ category

Result:

- Within five months of launch, TRANE CleanEffects had earned a *leading share of the whole-home air cleaning category* (ARI, YTD June 2006)
- Consumer perception of TRANE being *associated with clean air rose from 13 percent to 17 percent while competitor’s associations fell* (Nooro research – 6 months)
- *Seventy percent of physicians* participating in the PEOPLE cover wrap program *have recommended TRANE CleanEffects to their patients* to help manage allergies and asthma.

Objective Two: Educate consumers about IAQ and TRANE CleanEffects by generating 195 million gross media impressions

Result:

- Articles and segments totaling more than *249 million gross media impressions* covered IAQ issues and mentioned TRANE, including A-list placements such as *The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, Bob Vila TV, Parade.com, Los Angeles Times, AP, Forbes, Bloomberg TV* and radio

- TRANE CleanEffects claimed a *56 percent share-of-voice* in the HVAC category and a *95 percent share-of-voice* of media coverage vs. its overall clean air competitors within six months

Objective Three: Double online traffic to TRANE.com to help increase interest and sales of TRANE CleanEffects systems

Result:

- *As of June, visits to trane.com increased an average of 3,000 visitors per week over 2005, as a result of integrated marketing. At times spikes of more than 4,000 visitors per week were a result of key PR placements, such as the Wall Street Journal*
- *Throughout 2006, Web site visits intermittently increased up to 133percent; overall, visits to trane.com increased nearly 50 percent when compared to 2005*
- *Within five months of launch, TRANE sold more systems than the rest of the industry combined (ARI, YTD June 2006)*