

Always #LikeAGirl: Turning an Insult into a Confidence Movement

SITUATION ANALYSIS

The research was clear: at puberty, a girl's confidence plummets. At this sensitive time, harmful phrases such as doing something "like a girl" cast doubt on how powerful a girl can be, and can affect her for a lifetime. Always, the P&G feminine care brand, sought to change this by redefining "like a girl" from insult to inspiration.

In 2013, the FemCare category was primed for a movement. While Always historically focused on confidence based on Always' superior product performance, the opportunity was to build a fresh and more meaningful understanding of confidence to resonate with the next generation of consumers.

We needed to redefine confidence in a way that would resonate with consumers and be true to the brand. Based on the insight that more than half of women claimed they experienced a decline in confidence at puberty, the "LikeAGirl" campaign was created to empower girls during this time when their confidence is lowest and give the brand a powerful, relevant and purposeful role in this empowerment.

P&G Always needed to create a campaign that leveraged the brand's legacy of supporting girls as they make the transition at puberty to young women, while reinforcing why it's "relevant to me" and one that "understands the social issues girls face at puberty today."

RESEARCH

A study was conducted with Research Now to better understand confidence at puberty and better shape the campaign, finding that girls experience their biggest drop in confidence during puberty around their first period.

Always also looked at similar campaigns and social activations targeting the audience to best understand the engagement trends, and identified these key insights to incorporate in the campaign:

- Clear & simple articulation of idea & action needed
- Validate insight with data points
- Authenticity is crucial
- Enlist select celebrity influencers for buzz & visibility

Based on their research, Always determined that empowering girls during this critical life stage, when their confidence is lowest, should become the mission of Always. This would drive the campaign's strategy, message and mission. "Like A Girl" would become an empowering message. The program would ask why the phrase "Like A Girl" had become an insult and hold a mirror up to society at large to show how damaging these words were to girls, particularly at puberty.

PLANNING

Always planned a global campaign to drive an emotional connection to the brand, especially amongst Millennials, and foster popularity and brand loyalty.

The strategy was to take the commonly-used insult "like a girl" and capture the subtle yet negative power it creates to inspire a movement to change "Like A Girl" to mean "downright amazing."

This idea was brought to life through a social experiment to show the impact the phrase "like a girl" had on society - especially on girls pre- and post-puberty. The brand campaign would center on this social experiment to resonate with all generations of women (and even men). The centerpiece of the campaign: a video that captured how people of all ages interpret the phrase "Like A Girl."

Always partnered with award-winning documentarian and director Lauren Greenfield to produce the video featuring people of all ages interpreting the phrase "like a girl". During filming, it became clear that between puberty and adulthood, women had internalized the phrase "like a girl" to mean weakness and vanity. The experiment also demonstrated how a little encouragement can go a long way in changing girls' perceptions of what it means to proudly do things "like a girl."

Once the video was created, a campaign was built around it to spread this powerful message and empower women, showing that "Like A Girl" should be a meaningful positive statement (as evidenced with positivity scores in social media over 90%). The goal for an impactful launch for the video: Drive 2 million video views and 250 million media impressions.

The target audience was identified as Millennial women ages 13-34.

EXECUTION

Always' strategic campaign included:

- **Leverage research data:** Used tangible insights and data from the Research Now study to bolster the campaign credibility and news value and develop and drive content and messaging across program assets & tactics.
- **Introduce hashtag:** To reverse the meaning of the phrase, the social hashtag #LikeAGirl was introduced as a rallying cry for the mission to change. The hashtag invited participation and engagement for girls to let the world know what inspiring things they were doing "Like A Girl."
- **Video launch:** Leveraging trade media's ability to spark extensive consumer/business media coverage and its role as promoter of buzzworthy creative content, the Always #LikeAGirl social experiment video was strategically announced through an exclusive with Ad Age. The video was unveiled via a PR launch on June 26th on Always' YouTube site. Before the video's launch, the video was pre-seeded with key influencers and bloggers, who were asked to share it on their social platforms to help spark early word of mouth and begin viral spreading that would fuel traditional media coverage coinciding with the launch.
- **Strategic media outreach:** Following the launch, online and broadcast media were contacted, capitalizing on the surge of female empowerment movements. This approach, combined with influencer seeding, ensured continual robust coverage across traditional and social media categories, driving consumer and media buzz.
- **Engaging celebrities:** Celebrities including Vanessa Hudgens and Bella Thorne, chosen for their high social reach and relevance to the target audience, were engaged to post tweets on the campaign. These sparked additional organic celebrity tweets from Sarah Silverman, Tyler Oakley, Maria Shriver, Cher, Kristen Bell, Chelsea Clinton and Melinda Gates, all sharing the video and message.
- **Real-time news desk:** #LikeAGirl conversations across Facebook and Twitter actively monitored and engaged with in real time to amplify and maximize social sharing.
- **Global campaign:** Based on initial success in North America, the campaign was expanded to 20 markets.

EVALUATION

The campaign was an overwhelming success! What started as a small social experiment quickly grew into a trending social conversation that spread around the world and surpassed the brand's wildest expectations. This social media experiment had created a monumental shift in the conversation around the globe, and the #LikeAGirl video became one of the most popular breakthrough viral videos of the year.

Achieving the program goals, Always had historic success in emotionally connecting with the target through a clear purpose. According to brand research conducted after this campaign, **81% of women 16-24 support Always in creating a movement to reclaim "like a girl" as a positive and inspiring statement.** Additionally, other goals were far surpassed:

- The video achieved 76MM total global video views on YouTube from 150 countries (90% from the 20-country activation)
- 1 million+ people shared the video, 35,000 commented and user-generated content was 13%
- The program achieved **4.5 billion impressions around the globe**, including 1.7bn in the U.S., 1.6bn in the UK, 418m in France, 302m in China, 148m in Germany, 63m in Brazil, 41m in Mexico and 32m in Turkey
- **More than 1,880+ earned media placements** were secured around the globe, including:
 - A TV segment with #1 U.S. morning show GMA that resulted in a Yahoo posting
 - #1 spot for AdWeek's "Top 5 Commercials of the Week" for June 20-27; #2 Spot for Ad Age's Viral Chart on 7/1
 - Coverage on top influential media sites including BBC, Huffington Post, NYMag.com, Mashable, BuzzFeed & TIME
- **The program garnered more than 290 million social impressions and 133 thousand social mentions** with #LikeAGirl (99% positive/neutral) in the US alone
- **#LikeAGirl trended on Facebook** from 6/30-7/1 and **increased Always Twitter followers** by 195.3%

#LikeAGirl needed a bigger platform. So, Always leveraged Super Bowl XLIX to ask millions of girls, boys, women and men to join the #LikeAGirl movement. Always and 15-year-old brand ambassador Karlie Harman (a female quarterback who plays #LikeAGirl, inspiring others) activated #LikeAGirl live from the Super Bowl, with 4 on-site videos and 19 interviews. Through a robust content, tiered media and influencer strategy, #LikeAGirl dominated the news cycle with 4.64 billion online impressions and 1,623 overwhelmingly positive placements, trending nationally on Twitter and Facebook (over 4x longer than the next-closest ad/brand) with 1.1 billion social impressions & 597,261 #LikeAGirl mentions, including over 150 organic tweets from influential leaders, actors, singers, athletes & activists.