

Mary Havell

DURHAM RELAY FOR LIFE PR PLAN

Client Problem: The Durham County Relay for Life needs to maintain and recruit financial sponsors and participants to raise money for research and programs of the American Cancer Society.

Objective: To create a public relations campaign targeted toward the Durham community and with local media outlets to increase awareness and involvement with the American Cancer Society's Durham Relay for Life.

Goal: To increase awareness about the Durham Relay for Life and involvement among the Durham community and local media by generating five media clips and appearances on local TV stations prior to and during the Relay in May 2005. This will be achieved by increasing donations from last year by 25%.

Public's Characteristics:

-Demographic statement: The target audience might include large corporations, local media outlets, community members of various ages, races and gender. The majority of persons involved will be past participants and friends of the American Cancer Society. Local high school students, such as athletic teams, may be a good target audience.

-Psychographic statement: Most of the target audience will be cancer survivors and friends and family affected by cancer. In order to expand Relay for Life, it is important to increase awareness among publics not directly affected by cancer.

Persuasion Sequence: Past participants and sponsors in the Durham Relay for Life will not have to be informed about the significance and benefits of the Relay for Life and their involvement will be emotional. New participants and sponsors will have to be educated about the cause and their involvement will most likely be rational. Both audiences will feel that their involvement will have a significant consequence.

Strategies:

- To increase fundraising and sponsorships vital to the success of Relay for Life. There are numerous groups seeking money for various causes. The Relay for Life publicity team must educate and persuade to persons and companies why they should choose to sponsor the American Cancer Society.
- The Relay for Life team must expand its involvement to incorporate new participants, not directly touched by cancer.
- The Relay for Life team needs to target media coverage of the Durham Relay for Life. The media can play a large role in publicizing the relay for Life and gaining support and involvement among community members and sponsors.

Tactics:

- Send past sponsors a thankyou letter and information explaining how their donations given during the 2004 Relay were used. Elaborate on how exactly the American Cancer Society uses this money and how important it is for expanding cancer research.
- Provide past sponsors and new companies with newsletters that include when and where information about the Durham Relay for Life, contact information, importance of sponsorship and how to become a sponsor, and how the money will be used. Companies and individuals can receive the same newsletter.
- Fact sheet with statistics of Durham residents, North Carolina residents, and people across the nation affected by cancer.
- Send past participants a thankyou letter for their involvement and encourage them to register for the 2005 Durham Relay for Life.
- Design a Web site to recap last year's Relay, and include a short profile of someone famous who will be involved with the Relay, in order to spark viewers interests
- Distribute flyers and sign ups throughout the Durham area to community groups and high school campuses.
- Develop a public service announcement about the 2005 Relay for local radio stations and broadcasts.

- Provide local broadcasts and newspapers with a media advisory 2-3 weeks prior to the Relay
- Establish a donation drive

Evaluation: Compare the number of participants and money raised from the 2005 Durham Relay for Life with the same statistics from the 2004 Durham Relay for Life. Determine whether media coverage increased and if any former media outlets were absent.