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Repositioning CSGV: Strategies for 3D Gun-Printing Advertising

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Introduction

The Coalition to Stop Gun Violence (CSGV) is a non-profit organization composed of 47 national organizations working to reduce gun violence. CSGV pledges to secure freedom from gun violence through research, strategic engagement and effective policy advocacy. “Their coalition members include religious organizations, child welfare advocates, public health professionals, and social justice organizations” (CSGV). This diversity of member organizations allows CSGV to reach a wide variety of grassroots constituencies who share their vision of non-violence.

The problem that CSGV faces today is 3D gun printing, which is done through an industrial robot, a 3D printer that uses an additive process in which layers of a material (dust like) is laid down under a computer function. This printer can produce 3D models of objects of almost any shape or form. Consequently, the organization has been confronted by the public for this problem, where 3D gun printing is seen a threat to society, and nothing has been done to take on this matter seriously. In fact, CSGV has decided to downplay on this problem. As a result, CSGV lowers their value proposition and positioning by avoiding this topic, thus negatively impacting their image.

Abstract

This paper will discuss, examine and explain how CSGV’s action plan and advertising elements will help to reposition and elevate the organization with an effective media campaign. This media campaign will benefit CSGV by increasing brand awareness, value proposition and differentiation in relation to its competitors. It will also include studies of color, typography, and brand voice.

This paper will offer solutions to the organization's 3D gun printing problem that the public is bringing forward. It will allow a wider focus for gun violence possibilities, and point out the threats that 3D-gun printing can impose in our culture. Design solutions include an effective advertisement campaign with body copy that talks about the risks and consequences of handling 3D weapons.

The campaign will be directed towards a target audience of blue collar men ages 30-50, who can afford 3D printers with a focus in the production of 3D pistols. The problem we face today is that these printers are becoming much more accessible and their prices are reduced every year.

The design exploration will be focused on the target audience, where visual themes, colors, typography, and media platforms will be chosen according to their descriptions for better design solutions. The media platforms will include radio, print, digital, interactive and social media.

The discussion of color, from a psychological perspective, will be an interesting approach in order to attract the audience. Typography is also very important to help interest the viewer in reading the body copy. So Helvetica Neue will be kept constant throughout the campaign due to its large family variation.

The paper will also explain why it is important to invest in rebranding. Additionally, it will help to reposition the organization, and gain a new audience targeted by the 3D gun printing problem. As a result, the media campaign will elevate CSGV, while creating more awareness about the emerging threat.

About CSGV

CSGV is the first gun violence prevention group to talk about the issue in terms of democratic values, and to use the term “insurrectionism” to describe the NRA’s treasonous interpretation of the Second Amendment. CSGV’s guiding principle is to believe that all Americans have the right to live in communities free from gun violence (CSGV).

The organization believes that for too long, progress on life-saving gun reforms has been stalemated by legislative gridlock. According to CSGV, U.S. politicians are intimidated by the political power of the National Rifle Association, and have refused to act in the wake of tragedy after tragedy. CSGV has a three-part strategy to break this gridlock:

- 1) They are taking an aggressive approach with political advocacy. Their message to elected officials is simple: “The era of no accountability is over. If you do the NRA’s bidding and put our loved ones in the line of fire, we will educate your constituents about your record” (PAAW). This strategy involves the use of social media campaigns, TV, radio and print ads.
- 2) They are building personal relationships with legislators and challenging them to become dedicated, long-term advocates for sensible gun laws. The victims and survivors of gun violence in their staff are the leaders in this lobbying effort. They are also looking to facilitate the advocacy of state/local activists whenever and wherever they can.
- 3) They are the first gun violence prevention group to talk about the issue in terms of democratic values, and “...to use the term “insurrectionism” to describe the NRA’s treasonous interpretation of the Second Amendment” (PAAW). By exposing the hypocrisy of the NRA’s “freedom” message, they have reframed the debate and put them on the defensive.

CSGV was founded in 1974 by the United Methodist General Board of Church and society. It was originally known as “National Coalition to Ban Handguns”, which involved a

variety of members from multiple religious backgrounds as well as labor and nonprofit organizations (J.C, 2013). It was made to address the then high rates of gun-related crimes and fatalities in the U.S. Changed its name to the National Coalition to Stop Gun Violence in 1989 to address their concern with assault rifles including handguns.

The Competition

The Trayvon Martin Foundation was established in March 2012, by Sybrina Fulton and Tracy Martin, as a “not-for-profit” organization under the auspices of the Miami Foundation (PAAW). The Foundation’s purpose is to create awareness of how violent crime impacts the families of the victims and to provide support and advocacy for those families in response to the murder of Trayvon Martin. The scope of the Foundation’s mission is to advocate that crime victims and their families are not ignored in the discussions about violent crime to increase public awareness of all forms of racial ethnic and gender profiling educate youth on conflict resolution techniques and to reduce the incidences where confrontations between strangers turn deadly.

Of the 30,000 people who die in this country each year, how many could be saved? Brady’s strategic approach of legal action against bad apple gun dealers, extending background checks and changing social norms around guns seeks to change this tragic reality (PAAW).

The National Center for Victims of Crime (NCVC) is committed to increasing federal funding for crime victims and works to ensure that state funding sources for victim services are protected. “NCVC supports meaningful rights for crime victims in the criminal, juvenile, civil, and administrative justice systems” (PAAW). NCVC prioritizes work to address the needs of crime victims and promote victim safety and recovery. And also committed to promoting

national policy conversations about emerging issues and underserved victim populations with limited access to appropriate resources.

Solution

The organization needs to take into consideration what the public is suggesting, allow a wider focus for gun violence possibilities, and to make sure to point out the threats that 3D-gun printing can inflict in our society. Design solutions include effective advertisement with body copy that talks about the risks of producing weapons illegally. Molitch-Hou, writer for 3D Printing Industry shares how someone manufactured a large amount of 3D pistols was sentenced to jail for its illegal production (Molitch-Hou, 2014).. Molitch-Hou states: “The 1911 has been fired about 5,000 times without issue, proving it to be much more robust than the plastic Liberator pistol from Defense Distributed or those created by Yoshitomo Imura, who was sentenced to two years in jail about a week ago. Produced as a limited production run of 100 pieces”(¶ 2). If one person was able to manufacture 100 pistols, one can imagine how many more can there be produced by other manufacturers; this mass production can increase violence anywhere in the U.S. if produced illegally, people would not need a gun permit to purchase one. The media campaign solution for CSGV will differentiate the organization by making people conscious about the risk of 3D gun printing, and will ensure an advantage by repositioning themselves with this new advertising strategy.

Target Audience

This campaign is directed towards blue collar men between ages 30-50, who can afford a 3D printer with a minimum cost of about \$600 for the production of 3D pistols. These printing machines are becoming much more available, and their prices are finding themselves reduced every year. The world’s first working 3D-printed gun was The Liberator, designed by Texas law

student Cody Wilson (GWOB, 2014). According to GWOB: “Wilson says the plans for his design were downloaded more than 100,000 times before he was ordered to take them offline by the U.S. State Department. Wilson’s gun was created on an expensive 3D printing machine, whereas Imura was able to manufacture his on a printer costing approximately \$600” (¶ 8, 9). One of the biggest concerns is the buyers whose offspring are between the ages of 5-15. At this age, if they happen to find a plastic looking pistol in their homes, they may think it could be a toy that they can play with, and take it to school where other students and faculty may be in danger.

It is important to solve this problem because people need to be aware that not only guns in general are an essential problem in our society, but because they are the result of tragic events anywhere in the U.S., either in homes, schools, and other public places where American families may seem affected. So too, one think why are guns being manipulated by people that in the first place should not by any reason carry one. It is just a matter of mass producing them, sell them illegally in the streets, and start seeing more tragedies in innocent families. As a result, this message will be put into the consciousness of those irresponsible manufactures and parents that do not take the consideration of what may happen if these 3D printed weapons (toy looking) end up in the wrong hands.

Design Exploration

The design exploration will be focused on the target audience. Visual themes, colors, typography, and media platforms will be chosen according to their descriptions for better design solutions. In the book *Advertising: Concept and Copy*, George Felton describes what to do for an effective advertising campaign (Felton, 2013). Felton states: “Don’t do something unrelated to what the brand is about. Use digital advertising and social media to demonstrate that” (p. 134). This will help the media campaign reach the right audience and help identify the needs of the

organization. As a result, by understanding the demographics, plus the visual aspects and the use of social media, a more effective media campaign project will be accomplished.

Media Platforms

The campaign for CSGV will use different media platforms. These will include radio, print, digital, interactive and social media. The print media will entail posters, brochures and t-shirts. Felton makes a clear comparison that repositions the social media over its competitors (Felton, 2013). Felton states: “Social media speak the people’s truth, which is a lot more reliable than what passes for truth from many public relations firms, media conglomerates, and advertisers” (148). While print plays a part in this campaign, the digital media will be the major focus; thus making non-profit organizations’ campaigns more effective with the use of the internet.

Furthermore, a new website layout and reorganization of their information can prove to be a strong opportunity. Rather than using so much writing to communicate what CSGV does, they will use images and graphics to connect with the target audience. In explaining the principle of market segmentation, Felton criticizes the “One Size Fits All” campaigns (Felton, 2013). According to Felton: “Sophisticated production techniques allow many product and packaging variations, and the Internet individualizes people’s relationships to products, so one size no longer need fit all” (p. 32). Consequently, one type of advertisement for everyone does not work anymore. Therefore, digital advertising along with print and web media, will elevate the value proposition of CSGV. Thus using Facebook and Twitter as the main platforms, the target audience plus donors and sponsors will be called upon to contribute and share their thoughts.

Color and Typography

From the psychological point of view, color is a significant way to attract consumers especially in advertising. In the book *Designing Brand Identity*, the author, Alina Wheeler describes how color is used to facilitate recognition (Wheeler, 2012). Wheeler states: “Color becomes a mnemonic device. When you see a brown truck out of the corner of your eye, you know it is a UPS truck (p.50). The effective use of color will allow the organization to have their advertising themes get recognized better. Additionally, the color red will be more present in CSGV’s advertisements for an easier recognition on the violence theme. As a result, color plays a role in strategic positioning and psychological associations through the audiences’ emotions.

The font chosen for this media campaign is Helvetica Neue due to its large family variation with its thickness and widths. In writing for the *Newsweek*, Jessica Bennett talks about the ideal font (Bennett, 2008). According to Bennett: “Helvetica is an ideal font because it can stand the test of time” (p.14). The font is easy to read and due to its simplicity, it will be an effective way of communicating the message to the target audience. Also, by using the different families of the font, thickness and color contrast can help emphasize the headlines, change the weight in the sub-headlines and body copy within any campaign project. As a result, the flexibility of Helvetica Neue makes it an excellent choice for CSGV and its media platforms.

Why Invest in Rebranding

CSGV should invest in the rebranding of their image to reposition themselves, and gain a new audience targeted by the 3D gun printing issue we face today. In her book, *Designing Brand Identity*, Wheeler defines the importance of investing in brand identity (Wheeler, 2012). According to Wheeler: “The best identity programs embody and advance the company’s brand by supporting desired perceptions. Identity expresses itself in every touch point of the brand and

becomes intrinsic to a company's culture—a constant symbol of its core values and its heritage” (p. 10). The representation of a well-focused brand can help capture and motivate the target audience to take action on the concern the organization is presenting. The rebranding of CSGV is the new “big idea” due to its connecting aspect with the organization's mission, business strategies and communication. Furthermore, by working on the company's rebrand, it allows CSGV to present a memorable, recognizable and distinct image. Hence, the importance of rebranding represents an advantage to the organization due to the type of culture they characterize.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the paper examined, discussed and explained an action plan with advertising strategies to help CSGV reposition in comparison to its competitors. This approach benefits the organization by elevating its status, while increasing brand awareness and value proposition. It included research of the competition and the target audience to whom the campaign is directed. It also involved a study of color, typography, and media platforms where the campaign has better chances of succeeding. The problem is that the mass production of 3D weapons can increase violence if it isn't controlled. So, the solution for CSGV's media campaign will make people conscious about the risk of 3D gun printing, and ensure an advantage with advertising strategies touching based on the effects of its production. Allowing this new threat to take place will only affect our children, who will be the ones to suffer the consequences due to the irresponsibility of parents. Consequently, it's important to illustrate the threats about 3D gun printing as part of a design solution; a solution that demonstrates how wrong parents are for buying or producing weapons illegally. So too, facts and quotes within the ads will be placed as headlines to get the attention of the target audience. In addition, it is important to rebrand the

organization because it signifies an advantage due to the type of principles it represents. As a result, the media campaign will differentiate CSGV from its competitors by putting consciousness to the target audience about the risks of this threat.

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