



European Citizenship Awards

ActionAid Hellas, Anti-racist campaign; Social experiment “Racist Attack on a bus stop”

Description of the nominee:

Background

ActionAid is an international organization, working with over 15 million people in 45 countries for a world free from poverty and injustice. ActionAid Hellas started operating in Greece in 1998 and since then more than 150.000 citizens have actively supported our cause. After 2014 and the rise of racism and racist incidents in Greece ActionAid Hellas publicly took a stand against racism with awareness raising activities condemning racism and promoting solidarity. In 2015 we wanted to reinforce the antiracist and anti-nationalist discourse with an awareness raising anti-racist campaign and at the same time a pioneering media initiative highlighting the need for “borderless” solidarity and asking the public to actively take a stand against racism.

Execution/ Focus

Our anti-racist campaign and media initiative was structured around a video that was based on a social experiment. For the concept of our video we chose the social experiment as the tool to serve our cause for 2 reasons;

1. For its innovation. We designed and conducted the 1st social experiment for a social cause taking place in Greece.
2. As our main focus was the mobilization of the general public we needed a mechanism that would allow viewers to identify themselves with it. The social experiment allows and facilitates by definition such an identification mechanism as it is based on truth and true data and not on another scenario.

Consequently we decided to conduct a social experiment, film it and use its data and events in a video that we would promote virally. We conducted a social experiment that showcased how Greek people react in real situations of racism attacks. For our reality check, we selected a bus stop in a neutral commuter’s zone in Athens, hired two actors (one Greek, one Bangladeshi) installed two Go-pros and a steady cam that could not be seen and let the camera roll, while a verbal racial abuse scene was being repeated in front of citizens again and again for a whole day. We repeated the social experiment 22 times and the real reactions filmed were outstanding as in the majority of the cases the Greek people took stand by the immigrant. The results were amazing and helped us deliver a powerful video that went online on March 19th with the opportunity of the International Day against racism at the 21st of March. In

order to achieve that we established a dynamic communication strategy that focused on using most popular social media in a strategic way, most renowned media (TV, print, online), long-term public relations and modern powerful design. We used all our web platforms with zero cost. The video went viral within the very first two hours. The final message asked for taking a stand against racism and raising humanitarian stature against daily incidents of racism in our country.

Objectives

- Promote solidarity, respect for human dignity, non-discrimination, respect of minorities' human rights, equality.
- Launch a public discourse around solidarity and racism
- Raise awareness on everyday racism
- Educate public to recognize everyday racism
- Ask and empower the general public to raise humanitarian stature against everyday racism
- Condemn racism and racist attacks

Target Audience

Greek citizens who have witnessed a lot of turmoil based on ideologies, and have lost their hope and courage. People who have been trapped in xenophobia propaganda. A "sleeping" society who seems ignorant, uncaring and does not get shocked anymore by the racism incidents & the hate crimes. A public opinion, that becomes silently "partner in crime" in constantly increasing episodes of xenophobia, discrimination and racism.

Budget

- 25.000€ for production costs. The project needed profound organization, study and forecast of the unpredicted factors of a live shooting.
- 0 for marketing/communication costs. The video went viral within 2 hours, resulting to 500 media clippings and more than 1 million YouTube views with zero media expenditure

Partnership

The social experiment was designed and implemented in collaboration with our advertising agency McCann Athens.

Impact achieved:

Quantitative results

The video was uploaded on ActionAid's YouTube channel, Facebook, Twitter and website on March 19th. Within the first 24 hours, it broke the Greek Internet and traditional media with:

- a huge buzz in social media: 1512 retweets, 38.102 Twitter profiles reached, 37.461 Facebook shares and comments

- 1.109.000 people engaged with the original Facebook post
- 1.008.339 views on YouTube (and counting) reaching the 2nd position in YouTube Ads Leaderboard Greece for 2015. According to Google, the video ranked as most liked, most “subscribers gained”, most watched and most shared YouTube video in Greece for 2015.
- Sadly, we are still not able to calculate the massive number of views and shares from independent’s users reposting.
- It generated more than 510 media clippings; 13 tv clippings including interviews of ActionAid spokespeople, 30 articles on print media, 457 online clippings, more than 11 radio mentions
- It gained 5 social media awards (<http://www.socialmediaawards.gr/> Gold –Best use of Social Media for a Brand, Platinum- Content, Gold- Best Viral Campaign, Silver- Best Social Media Integration Campaign, Gold- Innovation in Social Media)
- It gained 5 Ermis Awards (official Greek advertising awards <http://www.ermisawards.gr/>); gold in PR category (Digital PR) | gold in Digital category (Social video) | gold in Production category| gold in AD category (digital video) | silver in Direct category (social causes and fundraising)

In order to achieve that we established a dynamic communication strategy that focused on using most popular social media in a strategic way, most renowned media (TV, print, online), long-term public relations and modern powerful design. We also collaborated with a top notch advertising agency, McCann Athens.

Qualitative results

- Launch of a nationwide public discourse around racism (apart from the unprecedented media success, we had schools & universities asking us to present the video)
- Awareness raising on everyday racism – 1m views on YouTube, almost 5m viewers on TV, more than 500 media clippings
- Public’s education and empowerment on the importance of their personal reactions against everyday racism
- Promotion of solidarity of Greek people towards migrants

What makes the initiative innovative?

- The heart of the initiative, the actual tool, that of a social experiment that created a campaign and media initiative based 100% on reality and true data and not on another advertising scenario.
- The impeccable production (gold Ermis Award for production); it was impossible to tell that the protagonists of the racist attack were actors nor that everything was being filmed.
- The zero cost promotion (gold Ermis Award for pr).
- The incredible viral success(gold Ermis Award for digital).

- The media success; more than 500 clippings.

Contribution to European values:

"We focused on the people that others forget; people who face discrimination. People whose voices are ignored: We made their human rights a mainstream matter, a matter of first priority promoting

- Respect for human dignity
- Freedom
- Democracy
- Equality
- Respect for human rights
- Non- discrimination
- Tolerance
- Solidarity

At the same time we focused on the human rights defenders, people who speak up against discrimination, in hope of empowering more people to stand by and defend the human rights of people who face racism.

Website or promotional materials:

Social experiment video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NhIaPWvW07o>