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White Cashmere Collection 2013

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ABSTRACT

The White Cashmere Collection is Canada's annual celebration of designing a future without breast cancer. A fund- and awareness-raiser for the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation (CBCF), the Cashmere Bathroom Tissue Couture collection stars Canada's leading fashion designers. The first-of-its-kind in the world, and entirely crafted in 100 per cent pure, soft and luxurious sheets of Cashmere Bathroom Tissue, the collection supports the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation's vision of a future without breast cancer. More than 125 Canadian designers have participated since 2004. The collection features limited-edition Pink Embossed Cashmere, with twenty-five cents from the sale of every package going directly to CBCF throughout October, Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

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Unique in the world, and proof-positive that public relations has enduring power to propel brand marketing, and sales-driving community-building through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), the [White Cashmere Collection](#) is a fund- and awareness-raiser for CBCF and stars Canada's top fashion designers and their couture all crafted in pure, soft and luxurious sheets of [Cashmere Bathroom Tissue](#).

Conceived in 2004 to spread the news that Cottonelle was changing its name to Cashmere Bathroom Tissue due to licensing issues, the White Cashmere Collection is now the centrepiece for Cashmere's fully-integrated CSR marketing program and the perfect intersection for PR to meet Social Media and Social Good.

Over the past decade, this first-in-the world Bathroom Tissue Couture collection has featured over 125 top Canadian designers and forms a brand platform for every aspect of Cashmere marketing: advertising; traditional/social media relations; cashmere.ca; [Facebook Vote Couture for the Cure™](#)

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contest; partnerships/sponsorships; consumer, customer and employee communications; and support for CBCF.

Kruger Products, maker of Cashmere Bathroom Tissue, is now one of CBCF's top five national brand partners and the White Cashmere Collection has made a significant contribution to the success of Cashmere Bathroom Tissue, contributing to a whopping, category-leading 23.9% market share (ACNielsen MarketTrack February 2014).

Statement of the problem/challenge

Strategic Objectives created the White Cashmere Collection with Kruger Products in 2004 to share news that Cottonelle was changing its name to Cashmere Bathroom Tissue. Its new, premium position would be, and remains, *"the softest feeling next to your skin; nothing feels like cashmere."*

The opportunity was to differentiate and elevate Cashmere above its competitors in the ruthlessly competitive, highly commoditized bathroom tissue marketplace and to create a uniquely feminine and premium fashion position for Cashmere by leveraging its namesake fabric's pure, soft and luxurious qualities. This would distinguish Cashmere in a marketing landscape cluttered with fluffy kittens (Royale), cartoon bears (Charmin) and golden retrievers (Cottonelle).

Description of the context of problem/challenge

To resonate with the intended audience of Canadian women aged 25-54 who purchase bathroom tissue for their household, our solution was to create the White Cashmere Collection as a fund and awareness-raiser for CBCF and showcase for Canada's top designers. Crafted in white Cashmere Bathroom Tissue, accented with limited edition Pink Embossed Cashmere, the White Cashmere Collection pivots on a mega-runway fashion show in September, supported by multiple media and online initiatives throughout the year.

The business need in 2013 was to celebrate the collection's tenth anniversary with national news-making, sales-driving public relations, fully integrated across all marketing and sales channels. Our success was evaluated based on secured media coverage, sales increase and establishing Kruger as one of CBCF's top five partners.

Research and analysis

The Kruger brand team provided proprietary research on the intended audience (Kruger, 2012). Strategic Objectives conducted extensive research on Canadian media audiences utilizing our proprietary media database to identify the needs, interests and opportunities with journalists who reach the target consumer: Canadian fashion, beauty, lifestyle, news, trade and consumer journalists (traditional, online, blogger and social media).

- **Target Consumer:** Canadian women aged 25-54, who purchase bathroom tissue for their household and: look for simple indulgences/luxuries that they can afford; are willing to spend a little extra on quality products; avid consumers of fashion through English and French traditional and social media (TV, newspapers, magazines, websites, Facebook); look to the Internet to research and understand products/services. Key consumer insight: one in nine Canadian women will be affected by breast cancer.

- **Category Research:** Our media analysis and research showed that bathroom tissue attracts minimal media interest and rarely receives coverage. Further research from an online study conducted by Cone Inc. and AMP Insights (2006) revealed that 83% of people trust a company more if it is socially responsible and that increased consumer engagement traditionally leads to increased brand engagement, customer loyalty and sales. Based on this research, we determined that CSR programs create an emotional connection with a brand's core demographic and provides a compelling connection with consumers and employees. A creative, engaging concept was essential to make the brand and the product newsworthy.

Communication

Until 2013, public relations was the primary awareness driver for the campaign. For the tenth anniversary collection, we worked in close collaboration with Kruger's marketing agency partners (Fuse, Totem, John St., Maxus and Propeller Digital) to develop a uniquely Canadian, multi-layered, multi-phase integrated marketing program. It was imperative to develop a credible and relevant approach to generate message-driven, sales-driving, branded media coverage that would engage and resonate with customers, consumers and stakeholders and drive sales. This was Cashmere's most aggressive CSR marketing campaign ever.

Strategic Objectives, together with Kruger Products, was responsible for every aspect of producing the collection's packed-out, invite-only, Toronto fashion show in September for 300+ media and VIPs, at the Frank Gehry-designed Art Gallery of Ontario. The show featured 40 models including a 20-person live retrospective show-opener and was hosted by breast cancer survivor and CTV Canada AM co-host, Beverly Thomson. The collection was curated by fashion producer Farley Chatto and starred 20 Canadian fashion designers—our largest cast to-date—whose garments and accessories were all crafted in Cashmere Bathroom Tissue. We secured Canadian supermodel Stacey McKenzie and Quebec blogger/breast cancer survivor Lolitta Dandoy to walk the runway; and negotiated pro bono partnerships with Town Shoes, Swarovski, Marc Anthony Hair Stylists and M.A.C. Cosmetics.

We also hired celebrity photographer, Caitlin Cronenberg, to produce 20 editorial Cashmere Bathroom Tissue couture photos and executed six national bilingual and traditional and social media campaigns over a 10-month period targeting journalists who reach the core demographic. Toronto, Vancouver and Calgary Media Tours expanded regional coverage and leveraged the collection's two leading western Canadian designers, Jason Matlo, from Vancouver and Paul Hardy of Calgary.

This was the first time that the White Cashmere Collection and CBCF were fully integrated in Cashmere's 2013 Fall advertising campaign. We collaborated with five Kruger marketing agencies to provide copy, photos and video for a national TV commercial ([Fall 2013 Cashmere TV ad](#)); print advertising; nine marketing integrations; a 10x10 keepsake booklet and video; and two trade magazine articles. We partnered – for the first time – with Kruger Trade Marketing to integrate the collection in nine in-store sampling and trade shows; the Rogers Cup, Canadian Tennis Open in Toronto/Montreal; and Tissue World Conference, Miami. We also: wrote all the White Cashmere Collection content for Facebook, which held the People's Choice Vote Couture for the Cure Facebook contest¹, and [cashmere.ca](#); produced and promoted the White Cashmere Collection Event [YouTube video](#); and sparked social media buzz with tweets trumpeting the hashtag #Cashmere10.

Evaluation

The Tenth Annual White Cashmere Collection met and exceeded its

1. This contest allowed participants to vote for their favourite bathroom tissue garment. Cashmere would donate \$1 for every vote to the Foundation.

objectives. Cashmere is now Canada's best-selling bathroom tissue and unites the brand with Canadian fashion designers and the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation. According to Kruger's Brand Tracker Study (2012), consumer awareness for the White Cashmere Collection is strong at 41%, and 54% of Canadians correctly associate Cashmere to the White Cashmere Collection. Kruger is now one of CBCF's top five brand partners and the White Cashmere Collection has been renewed for 2014.

The 2013 campaign secured:

- 106.78% MR2P™—exceeded objective by 26.78 percentage points²;
- 370+ original stories and 5+ hours broadcast coverage including local Toronto TV stations and national outlets including CTV News and Global TV News; three feature videos on the world's #1 largest online Trend and Trend Spotting Community, Trendhunter.com and an in-studio fashion show on Citytv-Breakfast Television, Canada's to-rated TV Morning Show;
- 155+ million media impressions with a \$0.001 cost per contact (industry standard is \$0.05)

The campaign received more than 45,000 Vote Couture for the Cure votes (exceeded objective by 25,000 votes) and the Facebook fan base grew by an average of 400 likes per day during the campaign; 1,600+ tweets yielded 6+ million Twitter impressions; and 350,000 Instagram Posts.

Cashmere sold more than 106,000+ Pink Cashmere units in October, raising \$26,000+ for CBCF, and unaided brand association to CBCF grew to 26% (Kruger, 2012). Brand volume grew +10%, outpacing +3% category growth and market share grew to a whopping 23.9%, up 1.2 points vs 2012, 6 points higher than competitors (ACNielsen, 2014). Cashmere Bathroom Tissue was recognized as "One of Canada's most powerful brands..." on CBC Radio's Under the Influence by Terry O'Reilly (January 2014). According to Burak Jacobson's February (2014) Tracking Report, the product outperforms competitive brands on brand image association measures including feminine, sophisticated, luxurious and fashionable.

2. Media Relations Rating Points™ (MR2P™) is a uniquely, Canadian PR measurement system that provides a tool for the qualitative evaluation of media relations campaigns and is endorsed by International Association of Business Communicators Canada & Canadian Public Relations Society

Conclusion

One of the world's longest running and most successful CSR programs, the White Cashmere Collection showcases the power of public relations to build an awesome brand platform with legs strong enough to thrive, which has allowed it to do social good for ten consecutive years.

The centrepiece of Cashmere Bathroom Tissue's year-round, made-in-Canada, fully-integrated marketing program, the collection has generated awesome traditional and social media coverage as well as international recognition, including: 37 national and international awards – two IABC/Toronto 2014 Awards of Excellence, Strategy Magazine's 2014 Cause+Action Award and an IPRA Golden World Award of Excellence in Marketing Communication. Kruger is now one of the CBCF's top five brand partners and the White Cashmere Collection has been renewed for 2014!

Sandra Palmara, CEO of the CBCF said,

Over the last 10 years, Kruger has made a significant contribution to the breast cancer cause enabling research, education and advocacy initiatives that are making a difference in the lives of women and their families experiencing a breast cancer diagnosis, (personal communication, 2014).

Key Learnings and Challenges

- Our biggest problem from the outset was “How do you make news for toilet paper, much less rebrand toilet paper to bathroom tissue?” Our solution was to think beyond the bathroom and the category, and to consider the end consumer's interests – fashion, comfort and small, affordable luxuries.

- The Canadian bathrom tissue industry is a ruthlessly competitive, highly commoditized marketplace and consumer products attract little media interest. Every year, we are challenged to reassert Cashmere's 'luxury with heart' position and surpass awareness-driving media coverage. By developing fresh, new integrated marketing tactics each year, the White Cashmere Collection continues to be a creative, engaging concept that cuts through the brand-to-fashion clutter and has helped to propel Cashmere Bathroom Tissue above its competitors and dominate as Canada's best-selling bathroom tissue.

- Two garments did not arrive in-time for the two-day editorial photo shoot and behind-the-scenes media coverage: Paul Hardy's garment was on a courier truck that was involved in a serious car accident in Winnipeg, Manitoba

and the courier lost Camilla Jørgensen's garment in transit from Montreal, Quebec. Once we received Paul Hardy's garment (that survived the crash) and Camilla made a new garment, we conducted a half day photo shoot with additional budget provided by the client to accommodate the greatly reduced additional fees we negotiated with the photographer/models.

- The delicate nature of Cashmere bathroom tissue causes garments to rip throughout the photo shoot and fashion show. We continually need to work closely with the designers to construct durable garments and carefully position models to conceal the damage and avoid further tearing, while creating a natural, graceful pose.

References

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Appendix 1 - Logo 1, English



Appendix 2 - Logo 2, French



Appendix 3 - Photo 1

Photo Credit: Greig Reekie



Appendix 4 - Photo 2

Vote Couture for the Cure™ Winner: VAWK by Sunny Fong
Photo Credit: Caitlin Cronenberg



Appendix 5 - Logo 3, Pack shot



Appendix 6 - Logo 4, Vote couture for the cure

Promotion: Funds and awareness builder

