

PRCASEBOOK

Abundant Forests for All: An Integrated Public Affairs Campaign

Do you know that the United States is covered by 750 million acres of forestland, an amount that has remained essentially unchanged for the past century? Or that the annual net growth of U.S. forests is 36 percent higher than the volume of annual tree removals?

Probably not. And that's why the wood and paper products industry formed the Abundant Forests Alliance (AFA). The industry faced the challenge of correcting common misconceptions about forest management and also telling its story about sustainable forestry practices. Porter Novelli, a national public relations firm, was given the assignment of developing an integrated communications program that would reach consumers, customers, and opinion leaders.

The slogan of the AFA campaign was "Renew, Reuse, and Respect." Research indicated that the key target audience should be 35-to-54-year-old college-educated women with kids at home because they are networked in their communities and have some interest in the environment. They also place value on leaving a legacy of making the planet a better place for future generations. Porter Novelli dubbed them "legacy moms."

The AFA campaign was launched with the publication of a children's book, *The Tree Farmer*, written by Chuck Leavell, the keyboardist for the Rolling Stones who also happens to be a tree farmer. The book used the theme of "Renew, Reuse, Respect" and was positioned as an activity for legacy moms and their children to do together.

To support the launch, three basic public relations tactics were used: (1) the establishment of a Web site (www.thetreefarmer.org), (2) media outreach to publications such as *Real Simple* and *Ladies Home Journal*, and (3) a satellite media tour with Chuck Leavell, which included an interview on CNN. In addition, Leavell appeared on the *Today* show on behalf of AFA where he talked with Matt Lauer about the importance of trees, tree farms, and how wood contributes to our daily lives. At the end of the interview, Leavell made a donation of 200,000 books to *Today's* Holiday Toy Drive which was met with cheers and applause from the crowd gathered on the plaza.

AFA also organized several other charitable and environmental education projects. In Gulfport, Mississippi, Leavell donated 10,000 books to local children living in the

area destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. AFA also worked with Project Learning Tree (PLT), a nonprofit, to fund environmental outreach programs in Dallas and Los Angeles.

The second component of the AFA campaign focused on the use of wood and paper products. It commissioned lifestyle expert Katie Brown to develop gift ideas made of wood and paper that children could make for Mother's Day. Another tactic was in-store scrapbooking demonstrations at 500 Wal-Mart stores that attracted more than 60,000 participants. A series of podcasts, called "Scrapcasts," were developed by professional paper artist Lynette Young and made available on AFA's Web site. Each episode features tips and ideas on creating scrapbooks. The podcasts were publicized in lifestyle magazines and a radio media tour. The highlight was an interview with Young on *Live with Regis and Kelly*.

Paid advertising also was a part of the AFA campaign (see example on this page). A series of lifestyle-oriented ads featured special moments and occasions such as a

This is one of the appealing ads that the Abundant Forest Alliance placed in magazines such as *Family Circle* to publicize its Web site.

The true magic
of forests is that even when you leave them,
you never really do.



From the wood in our homes to the paper in the office, it's amazing how often forests touch all of our lives. Maybe you're wondering, if we use so many of those products, will there be enough trees for future generations? Yes, if we balance the needs of nature with our needs. That's why the people of the wood and paper products industry plant more than 1.7 million new trees every day, work to protect wildlife habitats and encourage recycling. So while this day may not last forever, at least our forests can. Learn more at abundantforests.org.

Abundant Forests Alliance
Harvest. Nurture. Respect.™



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