

“Epiim for Estonian Children” – concept and PR strategy for the new charity campaign

Application category: Public Relations / Marketing Communication

Execution: Communications agency KPMS (project team: Henri Käsper, Karilin Engelbrecht)

Objective: The goal was to raise the reputation and social responsibility of Epiim – one of the largest cheese and butter producers in Estonia. As the largest exporter of cheese their expectations were to increase the overall presence in local market and to raise the product awareness through creating and promoting new sports and leisure opportunities for children. They asked us how to get all of this with one charity campaign.

Project’s budget: charitable fund: EUR 30 000 / PR agency fees: EUR 12 000 / technical costs: EUR 3000

Approach: KPMS worked out a charity campaign format for Epiim and turned to three main target groups:

- consumers who got the opportunity to donate 10 cents for every pack of cheese during one month;
- local community groups and NGOs to identify important local projects for children and youth from all over Estonia;
- general public to who Epiim’s message would be delivered through the traditional media channels as well as social media.

The strategy was to create a well-advised action plan for the entire five month campaign period by bringing media’s attention in addition to the launch event to every single charity project Epiim chose to support. KPMS organized the opening event to the media where the longtime manager of UNICEF Estonia Toomas Palu and famous local singer Hanna-Liina Vösa performed as the spokespersons and announced publicly that by buying the natural cheese from Estonian farmers, you can support Estonian children. The launch event reached to all the TV news and largest print and online channels.

During the consumer targeted campaign in all of the major retail chains Epiim sold 300 000 products and thereby collected 30 000 euros for charity. Close to 50 project applications were sent to us from all over Estonia. In total of 14 projects were executed, including a new skateboard park, playground for local children, science- and sea camp, musical instruments, etc. In order to ensure the widest possible media coverage KPMS focussed separately on local media in every county. Sharing the campaign into different events gave the opportunity to find interesting angles for media and keep Epiim in the picture as a big-time donator for Estonian children.

Results: Thanks to the carefully prepared communication plan Epiim recieved continuous positive media coverage during the whole campaign period, which in terms of numbers outperformed all the competitors during these five months. Trough the campaign Epiim for Estonian Children KPMS helped

Epiim to define itself as a socially responsible company who stands for the sustainability and durability in Estonia's rural life and agriculture by supporting local children and culture. KPMS reached all the desired target groups and exceeded the planned number of media coverage for several times.

In February 2016, Epiim received an important national recognition being given a honourable title of "Friend of Culture 2015" by the Ministry of Culture.

Assessment to the project's cost effectiveness: For 14 charity projects Epiim received nearly 100 television, radio, print and online media publications. Nearly half of them were different reportages in county newspapers and nearly ten stories were broadcasted in leading TV channels. Calculated on the advertising rates the total value for the media coverage would be more than 100 000 euros. Due to this wide public attention Epiim increased the value of the relationships with their partners and consumers.

Assessment to creativity and originality: Sponsorship and charity campaigns are one of the most challenging projects in PR-field, because usually they have nothing newsworthy for media. KPMS succeeded to come up with a unique format where the campaign was divided into pieces and thereby significantly increase the value of the media coverage.

Marketing manager of one of the leading retail chains AS Selver Triin Kaare said: "Epiim for Estonian Children was the most positive and thought-out campaign in 2015 since the communications and advertising parts formed a well-functioning and memorable whole. In addition to this, they really did lot's of good things for Estonian children. Thanks to clearly stated purpose and transparency, the campaign as a whole boosted the sale of Epiim's products and had a remarkable impact on the company's reputation."