

VAGINA VARSITY

- Libresse -



Agency	ByDesign Communications (in partnership with Net#work BBDO)
Sector	Healthcare
Client	Libresse
Campaign	Launch of #VaginaVarsity



PRISM AWARD ENTRY 2017

– HEALTHCARE –

OPENING STATEMENT

We need to empower women, young and old, to be feminine, positive and bold; to bring it, live it, and live fearlessly. We need to talk about period care in a fun, fearless way. But talking about periods or care 'down there' is super blush-worthy. It's taboo to talk about anything related to vaginas or even to say 'the v-word' out loud. So, we started the world's first Vagina Varsity, an online platform that teaches women about their bodies in a private, safe setting, guided by professionals. It's time to say 'boo' to taboo and 'hello' to Vagina Varsity.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM / OPPORTUNITY

Worldwide, women just aren't comfortable talking about pads and periods, never mind asking for advice. In South Africa's conservative society, stigma and shame are entrenched from school level. Most SA girls and women don't learn about everyday vaginal care, myths abound, and health problems are common. Millions of schoolgirls miss up to a week of school every month because they can't afford femcare products.

Within this context, Libresse, a feminine hygiene liner and pad manufacturer, asked us to re-energize their brand and move it up from the number five position in SA's femcare category.



RESEARCH

Existing research by Libresse indicated that there were no formalised places for young girls to learn about their vaginas and periods in a way that was objective and responsible. Early desktop research by us indicated that media wasn't educating audiences on the subject. The femcare category has a very low uptake on Twitter and Facebook and, in general, social media abounds with myths and stigma. The topic isn't often discussed publicly and, when it is, it's characterised by ridicule and shame.

We found that, for millions of women in SA, talking about vaginas (and even saying ‘vagina’) is embarrassing. But we also found that this doesn’t mean they aren’t interested. The most-visited pages on Libresse’s website (and those of their competitors) are the FAQ pages. In the consumer research groups (conducted by Net#work BBDO), the women all started off being shy when we introduced vaginal care topics but once they realised they were in a safe space, they didn’t stop talking. The same was true for the school talks.

When we approached Dr Mpume Simelane, a gynaecologist at Leratong Hospital who has worked with girls and women for many years, she said that the audience is asking questions that need bold, honest answers.

We found that women of all ages want information. They just don’t want it on traditional channels in old-fashioned ways. A need existed for vaginal education that is appropriate in terms of age, context and culture – not just for young girls, but for all women. There was also a distinct need for a private platform and relevant material.

What is the #VaginaVarsity - The Vagina Varsity course is a mix of short video content and extra bonus material in email-format; covering everything from anatomy to discharge, contraception and when to see a doctor.

PLANNING

Analysis of the statement of problem and the results of our research dictated that we introduce subject matter experts to media in small groups, as we didn’t want the conversation to spiral out of control. We want to inform and educate our audience – almost making them part of our story.

The main message we communicated to media is that we’re building an online community of fearless girls and giving them a safe environment in which they can learn and ask questions without being ridiculed.

Our aims were to destigmatise the word ‘vagina’, increase the conversation around the topic, create sign-ups for the Vagina Varsity and, ultimately, to sell product.

Our strategy had three components:

1. Traditional media
2. Social media (to foster a sense of community), and
3. Content creation.

To reach the first two groups we identified and worked with key influencers, pulling in SA YouTube sensation Pap Culture to gain online traction within the targeted audience of young girls. Pap Culture presented our content, in fun humorous ways – never been seen before in this category.

The obvious need for third-party endorsement was filled by partnering with Dr Simelane and our educational content was vetted by psychosexual consultant Avri Spilka, who has years of experience dealing with our exact age demographic.

EXECUTION

Hosting media at intimate sessions with subject matter experts, our client's Marketing Director Denese Pillay, Dr Simelane and Avri Spilka engaged in the conversation. We believe that talking to smaller groups of journalists allowed us to control the conversation and prevented the sessions from degenerating into the 'normal' response to 'the v-word'.

ByDesign's media targets were mainstream print media such as the Star, Daily Sun, Beeld and the Citizen, glossy mags like Cosmo and Grazia. The target was mass media coverage as well as online coverage and social media content aimed at the full range of our audience.



Broadcast shows that target moms, aunts and other role models, were targeted. As well as specific online channels targeting our main audience of young girls.

Our social media key influencers included the likes of the Miss Earth Foundation, Catherine Constantinides and Ella Bella (both ex-Miss Earths, and social activists) agreed to be influencers, and all agencies used their social media channels to drive to message as widely as possible.

One of the interesting aspects of the launch was the interaction of any men involved, while the audience was always predominately female if a man were to be in the audience he always had the most questions and played the biggest part.

The media coverage was fantastic and the social media conversation was instant, we had incredible influencers like Yusuf Abramjee tweeting and re-tweeting the Vagina Varsity content.

The campaign attracted so much attention that the SABC invited Libresse to host an hour long programme on vagina care and the Vagina Varsity.

Libresse SA @Libresse_SA · Oct 27
 Look who came to our launch event!
 @amomaledu @karishma_dipa
 @fleur_inconnue @graziasamag
 @lebomatolongZA
 Welcome to #VaginaVarsity



Vagina Varsity set up to help women

Fun, free online course where nothing's taboo

KARISHMA DIPA karishma.dipa@intl.co.za
 bodies from experts and in a private, safe environment.
 women learn about their bodies and sexuality through their

Friday
28 October 2016

The Citizen

Understand your vagina

NEW: VARSITY COURSE PROVIDES A STARTING POINT

» It breaks the taboos and allows real conversations to take place.

Tehepiso Makhele

It's high time brands loosen up on enforcing the status quo with their "blue liquid demonstrations" and consumers stop refusing to talk about femcare on platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.

It's really taboo to talk about anything related to vaginas and to even say the V-word out loud. The result is that women neglect to learn about everyday vaginal care and this results in embarrassment, shame, myths and even healthcare problems that women often feel too shy to discuss with anyone.

So the world's first Vagina Varsity was launched yesterday, where women, young and old, can learn about their bodies in a private, safe environment.

APPROVAL. Dr Mpume Simelane says the campaign is on point.

EVALUATION

Libresse achieved a 2% share-of-market growth over the campaign period, and the brand has moved from number five in the femcare category to number four.

Off a very modest R45 000 PR budget, the campaign received more than R2 million in earned media.

The direct mailer campaign (conducted by Net#work BBDO) performed as much as 20% higher than beauty and personal care industry benchmarks for open rates and click-throughs. We also exceeded our engagement goal by 300%.

Libresse now has 8,000 email subscribers and 300 YouTube subscribers off a zero base.

During the campaign, the brand dominated the conversation online about feminine hygiene, outperforming the category in reach and spread – which means that not only were people talking about Libresse, but way more people were talking about the brand than normal, in a category where everyone prefers to keep silent.

The campaign increased the search word ‘vagina’ in SA search queries related to the category, which means that we achieved our goal of removing the taboo on talking about vaginas and feminine hygiene in our market.

(1147 words)



NWISEWISE @Nwise... 13 Dec 2016
 My heart is doing so many things right now watching this interview...#VaginaVarsity was on MAGGS ON MEDIA...I'm not ok!
 @Libresse_SA



Lerato Litheko @Var... 12 Dec 2016
 I caught it. Well done.
 #VaginaVarsity is a very necessary campaign for so many reasons across the board @Libresse_SA @papculturesa

NWISEWISE @NwiseWise
 So apparently we were on @maggsonmedia 📺



eNCA @eNCA 11 Dec 2016
 Catch the latest episode of @maggsonmedia now on #DStv 403. Find out what #VaginaVarsity and #NightShift is all about.



Miss Earth SA @miss... 27 Oct 2016
 @Libresse_SA #VaginaVarsity is where women, young and old, can learn about their bodies in a private, safe setting, guided by professionals!



in reply to Miss Earth SA



Nisha Varghese @Ni... 27 Oct 2016
 @missearth_sa since i hv 1 night as well learn about it LOL :)
 @ChangeAgentSA @EllaBellaC @Libresse_SA #VaginaVarsity



in reply to ByDesign Comms



Network BBDO @Net... 27 Oct 2016
 @ByDesignComms We're watching all the Twitter action and loving it! Here comes more love <3 #vaginavarsity



FOUNDED BY Libresse®

Letter of Acknowledgement from the client

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20 March 2017

To Whom It May Concern

RE: PRISM AWARDS 2017

This letter hereby certifies that, Denese Pillay, in my capacity at Marketing Manager of SCA (Libresse), acknowledge and endorse ByDesign Communications' use of the Vagina Varsity for submission into the PRISM Awards for 2017.

Should you have any queries, please feel free to contact me.

Denese Pillay

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Denese Pillay'.

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