

The scream that became a whisper

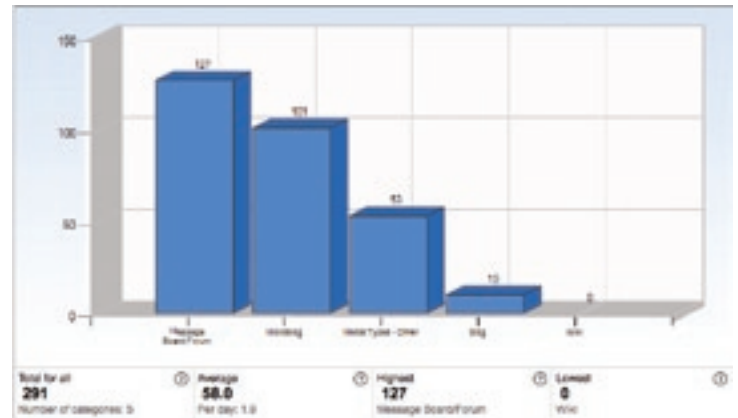
It has been called ‘ground zero advertising’, ‘a harmless bit of fun’, ‘sexist’ and ‘just something for the middle aged man in all of us’. The last Hunky Dorys outdoor campaign certainly divided opinion. However, to get a true picture of sentiment towards the campaign a good place to look these days is on social networks.

STEPHEN O’LEARY, O’LEARY ANALYTICS examines the coverage the campaign received in social media in Ireland and highlights some of the key results.

On the week of the 26th April 2010, Largo Foods launched a new advertising campaign for its crisp brand, Hunky Dorys. The campaign which featured on billboards and bus stops, and had its own dedicated micro site, centered around images of girls in bikinis playing rugby, and was accompanied by suggestive tag lines, including ‘Are you staring at my crisps’ and ‘Tackle these’. The photos were shot in Miami by Walter Iooss Junior, a photographer for *Sports Illustrated*. Within days, the campaign had caused controversy among the Irish public, with opinions divided on the campaign.

DAY BY DAY

It is very clear Hunky Dorys generated a lot of talk in social media in the weeks following the campaign launch, relative to where it started. For the days leading up to the launch, there were no mentions of the brand in social media in Ireland. Over the proceeding three weeks over 291 comments were made in a variety of social media outlets in Ireland mentioning the brand.



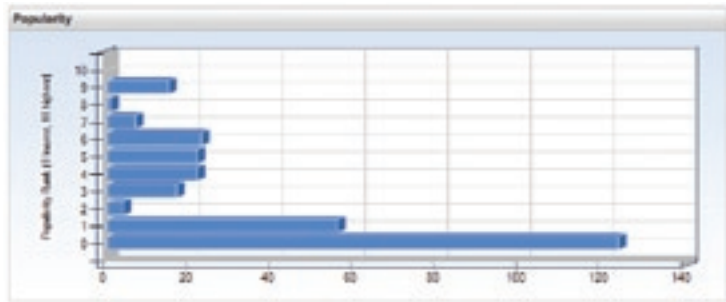
SOCIAL MEDIA TYPES

Message boards and forums, including boards.ie and electricpicnic.ie, saw the greatest concentration of social media mentions with 127 posts mentioning the brand. Twitter was second, followed by other media types (including news sources) and lastly blogs.

GENDER PROFILE

From a total of 291 comments, over 45% were written by men, 26% by women and in 29% of cases it was unknown.

Sentiment is calculated using an algorithm to look for positive or negative tone and in this sample, the results have been manually cross referenced for accuracy

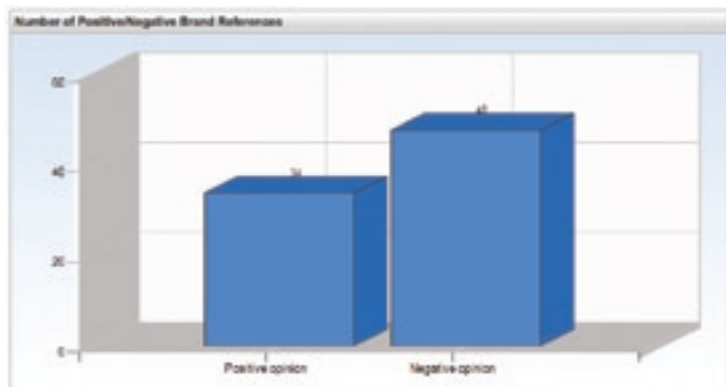


AUTHOR POPULARITY

The popularity rankings are based on a number of independent ranking systems including Technorati, Compete, Alexa and Quantcast. For Twitter, the number of followers, following and posts are taken into consideration when calculating popularity. Over 23% of those talking about the Hunkey Dorys campaign had a popularity ranking of five (out of ten) or higher.

SENTIMENT

Sentiment is calculated using an algorithm to look for positive or negative tone and in this sample, the results have been manually cross referenced for accuracy. Of the 82 mentions where sentiment is expressed, 48 are negative while 34 are positive.



THEME GRAPH

The theme graph is created by analysing the content of the results from the search and is displayed in a cloud chart. This represents the main ideas of the conversations. The larger the word, the more often it appears in the content. On a positive note, the word “good” appeared 58 times, while “great” appeared 32 times.

However, negative content appeared far more frequently. Words including “sexist” (58), “exploitation” (34), “horrendous” (25) and “offensive” (23) - and perhaps most worryingly from the brand’s point of view “rape” appeared 26 times.

While many PR companies may conclude that the campaign was a success, based on the amount of coverage it generated, the tone and sentiment analysis would suggest that much of the coverage was negative

CONCLUSION

According to UTalkMarketing.com, the Hunkey Dorys campaign cost approximately €500,000. However, following over 300 complaints to the Advertising Standards Authority of Ireland (ASAI) from members of the public, the advertising campaign was pulled only weeks after it was launched, and the microsite has also disappeared.

All of the statistics detailed above relate to coverage in social media in Ireland, but the campaign was reported on, and talked about, across the globe.

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It is impossible to argue that the Hunkey Dorys brand profile hasn’t increased, both in Ireland and across the globe, and nowhere is this more clearly demonstrated than in the increased level of discussion in social media. However, the ultimate success or failure of this campaign, or any for that matter, will be calculated in the sales figures, and it is only then that true effect of the publicity will become known.



Stephen O'Leary