

LAUNCH OF THE 2004 DUREX GLOBAL SEX SURVEY AND THE PLEASUREMAX CONDOM

BACKGROUND

Durex is NZ's leading condom brand, and each year undertakes the worldwide Durex Global Sex Survey (DGSS). The DGSS was launched worldwide in 1996. NZ has been involved and a key player since 2000. Ultimately, the DGSS aims to raise the profile of the Durex brand and position it as an innovative and "fun", yet socially responsible, condom manufacturer.

In NZ the 2004 DGSS coincided with the market launch of the new Durex Pleasuremax condom. The aim was to implement a strategic PR campaign that kept the DGSS in the nationwide news throughout the project (May – October 2004), and used the DGSS as the vehicle to launch the Pleasuremax condom.

OBJECTIVES

The aims of the public relations initiative were:

- To Increase the number of global participants in the survey to 212,000, and increase the number of countries participating to 40
- Position Durex as representing and reflecting the voice of all sexually active adults, in particular youth aged 16-24 years
- Communicate and reflect the shift in brand positioning while maintaining the historical values of the Durex brand
- Raise awareness of the DGSS.
- Reinforce Durex as NZ's leading innovative condom brand.
- Use the DGSS to demonstrate and highlight Durex's commitment to raising awareness of sexual health issues in a credible, responsible, but fun way.
- Increase sales of Durex condoms.
- Achieve widespread and in-depth communication of key Durex messages –innovation/inspiration, fun, reliability and expertise.
- Maintain ongoing media coverage throughout the year by using data to support topical features in the media.
- Exceed media coverage achieved in 2003 by 10%.
- Drive consumers to www.durex.com

Pleasuremax only:

- Drive sales of the new Pleasuremax condom
- Educate new and existing consumers about the benefits of Pleasuremax and encourage consumer trial.
- Effectively utilise the DGSS to launch Pleasuremax

Target Audience

- Youth aged 16 - 24 years

Key Durex consumers

- Men and women aged 25+

Mostly in stable, permanent relationships, but recognising that changing societal trends (increase of incidence of STIs and HIV/AIDs, late marriage, sexual experimentation) increase the need to communicate to this audience.

- Key influencers in the sexual health arena – Family Planning Association of NZ (FPANZ) and sexual health clinics.
- Targeted consumer (lifestyle magazines, websites and news portals, daily newspapers), health and pharmacy trade media, and radio (youth and talk back stations)

There was no advertising budget to support the launch of the DGSS and Pleasuremax. This required the copnsultancy to target specific media with tailored messages and DGSS results.

KEY MESSAGES

- The DGSS provides a global insight into the sexual attitudes and behaviour of people around the world
- The DGSS is a credible and in-depth source of information on sexual activity and is a true reflection of sexual activity in New Zealand
- Durex is a highly innovative and socially responsible condom manufacturer
- Kiwis can be a part of the 2004 DGSS by entering online at www.durex.com
- Now in its fifth year, New Zealand is a key player in the DGSS
- Durex has an innovative range of condoms that not only provide protection against STIs and unwanted pregnancies, but provide a more enhanced sexual experience

- Durex condoms provide sexually active people with the confidence and inspiration to explore – they are fun and reliable

Pleasuremax only:

- Durex Pleasuremax condoms have uniquely positioned raised dots and ribs, and are the ultimate in pleasure-enhancing condoms

STRATEGY/PLANNING

The strategy was comprised of a three-prong approach (May-Oct).

1. Promoting the DGSS through a targeted media relations campaign.
2. Leveraging DGSS to launch Pleasuremax.
3. Ensuring that both launches were complementary, and did not cannibalise the other's media coverage potential.

Some key points in the strategic communication:

1. A comprehensive media target list was compiled and media messages were tailored and targeted to each medium so that they were highly relevant and would capture journalists' interests.

Interest in the campaign was maintained by keeping it fresh with new/quirky angles as they developed, including utilising 2003 results.

Results were released nationally, but with key results pitched to matched media.

2. Interest in DGSS was leveraged via media relations targeted to key Pleasuremax audiences, in particular to radio.
3. Pleasuremax media was confined to target media – selected radio and consumer lifestyle titles. The timing was designed to provide continuous, complementary flow to media.

IMPLEMENTATION

The initial launch of the PR campaign took place on 10 May, and momentum was maintained through to 12 October when the final results were released globally, and followed up.

LAUNCH:

- Five local Q&A suggestions were developed to be a part of the NZ DGSS, ensuring that the questions would drive media interest; e.g.. Who is NZ's sexiest celebrity?
- A DGSS release was sent to targeted print and internet media, and customised for radio. These informed media nationwide that the survey was online, encouraging Kiwis to take part.
- Print and radio versions of a Pleasuremax product release were distributed with the DGSS release. Pleasuremax samples were sent to select key media. Tier One media (such as 91ZM, The Edge, The Rock; TV and CLEO) received other Durex merchandise as well as Pleasuremax.
- In conjunction with the launch of the DGSS, listener giveaways were pitched and implemented through key radio stations. The giveaways helped launch Pleasuremax and helped maximise brand awareness and interest in the DGSS – driving respondents to the website and acting as a vehicle for coverage.
- A further media release was drafted and distributed nationwide (June), a month before the end of the survey period, reminding New Zealanders they had one month left to participate in the DGSS survey.
- A diary note release was issued one month prior to the results release, aimed at reminding media of the DGSS and generating interest in the impending results (October).

RELEASE OF RESULTS

- The New Zealand results were analysed, making comparisons to global results and averages. A localised DGSS report was created and sent to the media.
- To ensure deadlines were met, results were pitched to identified long-lead media.
- A media release was distributed to approximately 175 national media, emphasising key New Zealand findings. Once the global embargo was lifted, results were pitched to targeted media, highlighting the results most relevant to their specific interests.
- A comprehensive Q&A document was compiled and the client was briefed prior to media interviews.
- Media interviews were pitched to key TV and radio media for both Durex and the FPANZ.

- To help generate further interest in the findings of the DGSS and help with brand awareness, new Durex merchandise was sent to media in Durex folders, along with the full DGSS report and media release. The collateral included Durex sweat bands, Durex CD holders, condom holders and Durex stickers.
- Further listener giveaways were pitched to key radio stations to coincide with the release of the DGSS results. Prize packs, made up of new Durex merchandise and products were sent to five stations, and helped to maximise coverage of survey findings. The giveaway packs comprised Durex backpacks, trucker caps, sweat bands, T-shirts, Pleasuremax condoms and Play lubricant.
- New Zealand's sexiest celebrities, as per the survey results, were sent Durex backpacks full of the new Durex merchandise and products, along with a letter congratulating them.

PUBLIC RELATIONS CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

While the NZ launch of Pleasuremax was important to Durex, essentially it was a product launch. To ensure Pleasuremax achieved coverage as well, the product was utilised for giveaways and samples throughout the campaign.

The main challenge was preventing media apathy and maintaining interest throughout the campaign's duration, especially as this was the DGSS' fifth year in NZ. Due to the fact that coverage from previous surveys is published throughout the year, some media felt the survey "has been done before". Other lifestyle surveys were also competing for media space.

Another consideration was to ensure that the information regarding the serious nature of HIV/AIDs and STIs, as well as unsafe sex, was not lost in the more light-hearted findings.

The challenges were met by careful targeting of information, understanding the media and NZ society, finding different media angles and always keeping the survey exciting, but communicating the serious message when appropriate.

Creativity with the local questions ensured media interest through choosing the right people e.g., utilising Daniel Carter at the beginning of the rugby season, and choosing Nicky Watson who is frequently in the media and always a popular addition to NZ's sexiest celebrities.

The voluntary backing and involvement of FPANZ, and their agreement with survey findings, also reinforced Durex's credibility as a trusted condom brand.

RESULTS

The launch campaign exceeded all objectives – increasing print and broadcast coverage for Pleasuremax (as well as other Durex products), and the Durex brand. In addition, the DGSS coverage reinforced Durex's position as a reliable source of information on sexual attitudes and behaviours, and enhanced Durex's place as New Zealand's leading condom brand.

The association with top Kiwi celebrities ensured increased credibility for the Durex brand and positioned it as fun and light-hearted.

SSL NZ (Durex) increased total condom sales during the campaign. Between October and November 2004, when key DGSS activities included Pleasuremax, sales of the condoms increased 30%, with no advertising assistance.

Media coverage showed an increase of 57% from 2003 DGSS. In addition, the campaign reached an approximate audience of almost five million people (excluding TV audiences).

All coverage mentioned either Durex or the DGSS (15 print articles, seven TV items, 45 radio segments, 17 stories on websites/internet portals). For Pleasuremax where the emphasis was radio, the brand received coverage on stations such as 91ZM (on three different shows), The Edge, The Rock, Newstalk ZB, Radio Pacific, regional stations and More FM.

The campaign increased awareness of the DGSS and the Durex brand in regions throughout New Zealand through substantial coverage achieved on regional radio stations. There were multiple interviews with Victoria Potter in regions including Wairarapa, Taranaki and Gisborne. In Wairarapa and Taranaki coverage of the survey included giveaways of Durex prize packs, which provided increased branding for Durex and discussion of Durex's products.

A TV One reporter described the DGSS results release as one of the best press releases she had read in terms of merging serious and light-hearted information without losing impact.

NZ was one of only four countries to “smash” the minimum rate of 1000 respondents within three days of the launch (achieved 659 respondents within one day). Out of the 41 countries involved, NZ ranked 14th with the number of final respondents– an extremely high response rate – impressively only 400 fewer respondents than achieved by the US.